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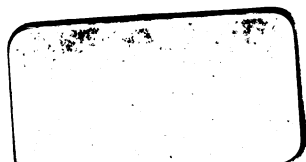
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# GERALD BOYNE:

A Novel.

BY

T. W. EAMES.

*IN THREE VOLUMES.*

VOL. I.



London :

SAMUEL TINSLEY,

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# GERALD BOYNE.

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## CHAPTER I.

### A CITY OFFICE.

“You would like me to send some one else?”

“Yes; I should prefer it.”

“You object to go?”

“I should prefer not going.”

“What can be your reason?”

“Well, I don’t think that a gentleman, or an honest man, ought to do anything of the kind.”

“You only do it for me.”

“I know that. Of course I am not responsible. I am your paid servant; I am bound to obey your orders whilst I am in your employ. If you insist on my doing the

business, I must. But I should much prefer your entrusting it to some one else."

"Never had any one refused to do this kind of work before. As for gentlemanliness and honesty, you must forget all about that in the city, my young friend—that is, if you wish to get on. You don't find much true gentlemanliness or honesty anywhere; and the city, where people are all day long driving hard bargains, trying to swindle each other, and almost to cut one another's throats, is the last place where you ought to expect to find it. I had the same notions as you have, when I was young; but I soon found out that it was wise to drop them. I should have sunk, if I had not. Well, please send Mr. Crummerton to me."

The above dialogue took place in a comfortably furnished private office, situated on the floor of one of those large, handsome blocks of buildings called "chambers," and which, when compared with the narrow roads they bound, remind one of tall ships anchored along both the sides of a canal, leaving just room enough between the opposite vessels for the passage of a small boat. The speakers were Mr. Maynard, a London merchant, and his clerk, Gerald

Boyne. Mr. Maynard was a good-looking man of about fifty years of age. We will sketch his portrait, as he sits in his arm-chair, leaning over his desk, and watching the face of the young clerk in front of him, with an expression of surprise and doubt in his keen grey eyes. His hair, which was of a light brown colour, with sprinklings of grey showing here and there, was plentiful, or, at any rate, was so arranged that no baldness should be visible. A pair of short-clipped, curly whiskers decorated his cheeks. His nose was rather aquiline, but terminated rather sharply at the end, giving an inquisitive appearance to his countenance. His well-shaped mouth was bounded by two good-tempered looking thickish lips, which were shaven, as also was his round, dimpled chin. His cheeks were plump, and rather warmly tinted; and his broad, white forehead had several lines crossing it. He was dressed in a blue frock-coat and white waistcoat, and (we take a peep at his legs under the table) light trousers; his black silk scarf was fastened by a diamond pin, and on the little finger of his left hand, which was laid carelessly on the desk, was a splendid intaglio.

Now, let us take a glance at the clerk, Gerald Boyne. His age was twenty-three or four. His face was oval in contour; the nose was straight and well formed; a slight moustache shaded his short, upper lip; two expressive black eyes sparkled beneath a pair of finely arched eyebrows, and his pale complexion was relieved by a little red on the cheeks. His hair was of the darkest shade of brown, and curled over his clear, intellectual-looking forehead, which was delicately veined at each temple. His figure was slight and elegant, and he was about the medium height. He was tastefully but plainly attired; there was not the "flash" cut about his clothes, in which so many of the young gentlemen of the city delight. He did not indulge in mock jewellery, nor in a loud-patterned scarf. A vestige of white wristband intervened between his coat-sleeves and his small white hands.

After asking Boyne to send a clerk to him, the merchant had taken up a pen and commenced to write a letter. The young man stood still. He hung down his head, and ran his fingers nervously along the edge of the desk. His face wore an expression of anxiety.

"I hope," said he, after a short pause, "that in everything else I give you satisfaction?"

Maynard looked up from his writing.

"Eh—what—satisfaction? Yes," answered he, bending his head over the desk again; then, giving a quick glance at his watch, he added: "but send Mr. Crummerton quickly, please!" and the merchant went on with his writing.

There was a sorrowful look on the young man's pale countenance when he returned to the outer office. He walked up to an individual who was perched upon a high stool, and was apparently engaged in adding up a long row of figures.

"Crummerton," said he, "Mr. Maynard wants you immediately."

"The old man must wait until I've totted up this, then. I'm not going to give myself extra trouble, because he's in a hurry. He gets quite enough work out of me, for the screw he gives me," replied the person addressed, in a rough, husky voice.

The gentleman finished his column, wrote down the total, placed his pen in one of the little holes around the margin of his metal

inkstand, stretched his arms out several times, gave a yawn, and then jumped off his stool.

Now this worthy is standing on the floor, we will examine him. He was a short, thick-set man, with long muscular arms (terminating in coarse, red, thick-fingered hands,) and short, stout legs. His body was long; his stomach was protuberant; and his large, round head was joined to his chest by a short, thick neck. His forehead was low and narrow, and was embellished by several little red pimples, as were his nose and face. Two small, watery, light eyes, with the whites turned into yellows, were dimly visible between large, baggy eyelids. Eyebrows he had none, or none worth speaking of. His nose was a huge, formless, indescribable mass. His mouth was large, and, when open, allowed two rows of ugly, discoloured teeth, of the gravestone order, to be seen. His nether lip had the regular tippler's drop. His cheeks were big and fleshy; and the lower jaw was decidedly heavy. His bullet-head was covered by a crop of short, brick-red hair, which was parted down the centre, and two enormous ears stood out from its sides. He looked the type of low cunning

and debauchery. He would have served well for a model of a god to preside over dirty tricks and casinos. He was dressed in quite the fast style. A cheap, loudly cut suit of tweed covered his remarkable person. Over his boots were light drab gaiters. His hands were adorned with several rings—probably of aluminium gold, with sealing-wax instead of stones—and a massive Albert chain of the same metal formed a festoon across his waistcoat. A most gorgeous scarf hid his shirt-front from view; so we cannot ascertain the colour of it. His age appeared to be about twenty-six.

The moment this gentleman reached the floor, he commenced rehearsing one of those graceful and noiseless dances that belong to the “break-down” species. I am sorry that I am not sufficiently acquainted with “break-downs” to be able to give the name of the individual “break-down.” As an accompaniment, he whistled the tune of a popular comic song. The young gentleman had sufficient respect for the ears above him, below him, and around him, not to exhibit either his whistling or his dancing talents in their highest state of



development. If he had done so, Heaven help the ears of those above, and those below, and keep those in the same room with him from going mad!

After he had continued this amusement (to the infinite amusement of himself, and to the disgust of many of his fellow-clerks) for some time, he suddenly stopped, walked up to a long, cadaverous-looking, dark-haired man, who had been putting his face through a most varied series of grins, and who had elicited numerous wonderful chuckles from his vocal apparatus during the terpsicorean and whistling performance of the short gentleman.

"Hallo, Bill!" exclaimed Mr. Crummerton, giving his friend a hearty slap on the shoulder. "what ye up to to-night? Going to the 'Grand Cham' or the 'Mygal'; or will ye do a round at the 'pubs'?"

"Don't know," replied the long clerk, thoughtfully. During his meditations he applied frequently to his nostrils a halfpenny bunch of violets that he had bought on his way to his office. The ragged frock-coat, used as an office coat, formed a striking

contrast to his new pair of thirteen-shilling trousers.

"Well, what d'ye say to the 'Snobs' Palace'?"

"Don't know," replied the long clerk, rubbing his forehead.

"Have a look at the legs at the 'Royal Canaries'?"

"Tired of legs—seen too many of 'em in my time." The long clerk gave a very weary yawn.

"You are a blazy individual! Let's go to 'Ighbury Barn, then, and tickle the barmaids. You may meet your friend, little Jenny, there, you know. Goloptious girl, that; crummy!—very crummy! Mum, mum, mum, mum!" Mr. Crummerton smacked his lips and patted his stomach at the recollection of this fascinating Miss Jenny.

"I'll tell you what it is, old fellow," said Bill, looking at his friend in a curious manner which combined knowingness with pride, "I was so jolly tight last night! I think I must have put away quite half-a-gallon of beer and six cold whiskeys. Got a splitting headache this morning, though! My head was all so

whirligig in my bed that I didn't know how to get out of it. I never thought I should have got to business to-day. I gave my head a cold douche, and then I swallowed a couple of sodas, one after the other, and then I felt a bit steadier. I didn't attempt to touch any breakfast: I knew I couldn't tackle that. I thought I should have been obliged to send a note to say that I had sprained my ankle, or was suffering from a very bad attack of the family colic, I felt so horrid seedy. How I managed to walk down here at all, I'm sure I don't know. Everything seemed in a mist. Cabs, horses, omnibuses, and foot-passengers, all seemed to be fluttering about behind a thick gauze. How I kept out of the way of the lamp-posts, and got safely over the crossings, I can't tell. All I know is, that at every step I took I felt as if I should roll over, or roll into somebody. I don't feel so dazed now; but I have the headache still. I've been pretending to be hard at work, but I've scarce done a single stroke. If I attempted to think, didn't my head split, by jingo?"

"I thought you were skriffy when I did a

skoot! You should have left when I did!" exclaimed Mr. Crummerton, laughing.

"Shut up, will you! You don't want the old boss to hear you, do you?" said Bill, angrily.

"Poor old Bill!" replied Mr. Crummerton. "We'll go out presently; and then I'll toss you for a B. and S."

"And you'll win, as usual," said the long clerk, dolefully.

"All luck, you know, all luck!" answered Mr. Crummerton, quietly chuckling.

A more acute observer of human nature than Bill would have seen a slight twinkle of self-satisfaction illumine the bleary eye of Mr. Crummerton, which would have warned him not to toss again with that gentleman, and would have impressed him with the idea that he had been "done."

"All right, I'll come out and toss you for a B. and S.," said Bill. "I dare say I'll go out with you somewhere to-night; but I can't tell you yet. My head's not right enough. I don't feel up for anything now."

Bill put his hands under his coat-tails, and

made a few listless steps backwards and forwards.

"Have you forgotten that I told you Mr. Maynard wanted you?" asked Boyne of Crummerton.

"No," replied Crummerton, sulkily.

Boyne took no notice whatever of his colleague's surliness, but turned again to his work.

"He's a 'aughty 'umbug!" whispered Mr. Crummerton into his friend Bill's ear, as he indicated Boyne by a jerk of his thumb. "I know he thinks himself superior to us. I'd like to have a round with him, but he never gives one the chance; he's always so deuced civil!"

Crummerton gave a whistle, and waddled towards his employer's room.

"Come in," said Mr. Maynard, in answer to his knock.

"You want me, sir?" said Crummerton, advancing towards the desk, bowing and smirking and rubbing his red hands one in the other.

"Yes," replied Maynard. "You don't object to going to Samson and Baynes about this matter?"

The merchant thrust some papers and a letter into Mr. Crummerton's hands.

"Certainly not, sir; certainly not, sir!" said the short clerk, in a cringing manner.

"Then please go at once!"

"I will," said Mr. Crummerton, with great alacrity.

He bowed and retired from the presence of his principal.

In the outer office his manner at once changed.

"Look here, old bloke," said he to his friend Bill: "if we're to toss for that brandy and soda, we'd better go out together now."

"All right," replied Bill.

Both these worthies then proceeded to take off their office coats, and to replace that part of their attire by two velvet-collared frocks of a fancy cloth, and braided and buttoned to the utmost.

"Got to go to Samson and Baynes for Maynard. Deuced nuisance, isn't it?" said Mr. Crummerton, taking a very tall silk hat, with a very narrow brim, down from a peg.

"Yes," answered Bill, taking from his pocket

a flaming silk handkerchief, and preparing to give a final polish to another head-piece of the same kind.

"Why couldn't he have sent another fellow?" grumbled Mr. Crummerton, as he put his hat on very much on one side, and gave his head a shake to ascertain that it was on securely.

Then the two friends—or "pals," as I have no doubt they would designate themselves—left the office arm-in-arm.

"Frightful little snob, that Crummerton!" muttered Boyne to himself, as he looked after them. "I almost regret," added he, "that I refused to do that. It might offend Maynard. If he turned me off, I should be in a fix. I should never have thought that a nice fellow, like Maynard, could have been such a sharp practitioner, though! He is always so gentlemanly and kind; so different from most men of business one meets with."

The merchant, in his private office, was saying,—“It is quite a treat to have an honourable young man like Boyne near you, when you are surrounded by such cringing young wretches as that cad, Crummerton.

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That Crummerton will be tried for forgery, burglary, or felony of some sort, one of these days,—I am as certain as I am sitting in this chair. I'll keep my eye on young Boyne. I like him. I hope the city won't corrupt him."



## CHAPTER II.

## HOW OUR HERO LOST A FORTUNE.

GERALD BOYNE was the only son of a naval officer, who had died without making any provision for his wife and child. The elder brother, a rich old bachelor, had adopted the boy, and had brought him up in his own house after the death of his mother, to whom he had allowed a comfortable annuity. The old gentleman had spared no money on his education, which had been carried on at home by means of tutors and masters: he was so fond of his nephew that he scarcely liked him to quit his side. Gerald was recognized by every one as his uncle's heir. Unfortunately, about a year and a half before the time of which we are writing, the poor young man happened to fall violently in love with a beautiful girl on

the look-out for a rich husband. The lady was penniless, and, worse than that, heartless. She was one of those detestable women that are ready to sell themselves to any man, young or old, for money. Gerald suited her designs exactly; he was young, handsome, and, on the death of his uncle, would be rich. The old gentleman saw clearly through the lady's manœuvres, and determined that his dear boy should not be taken in. He reasoned with him—displayed the mercenary character of the woman to him in its proper light; showed him the mean, sordid soul that inhabited that lovely form, like base lead in a golden case; implored him to free himself from her fascination, which would but pain his heart the more the longer he submitted to it, for his eyes must be opened to the truth at last; but it was all to no good: Gerald would not believe a word that he said against the lady, and finally declared that he would make her his wife at once. This so incensed the uncle that he threatened, if his nephew did commit such an act of folly, to leave every penny of his fortune to a cousin. The young man replied that he could do as he liked about that, but that he would marry his

love. More angry words ensued, and the nephew was at last ordered out of the house by the uncle. He flew to seek consolation in the arms of his innamorata. The artful woman had not much difficulty in persuading the youth that his uncle's rage would soon blow over—as, undoubtedly, it would have done, if he had lived. Directly the young man had left the house he sent for his lawyer, and executed a new will in favour of his cousin, and he did not even mention his nephew's name in it. The excitement he had undergone brought on an apoplectic fit, to which he fell a victim that very night. Gerald, who, after he had left his beloved, was greatly grieved at the quarrel which had occurred, determined to go to his uncle and see if he could effect a reconciliation with him. It was late at night, but he felt that he could not rest quietly until he was friendly again with that kind loving old man, who had brought him up, and taken so much care of him. He repaired to his uncle's house, and knocked at the door. It was opened by an old manservant. Gerard at once noticed the old fellow's sorrowful countenance.

"My uncle?" asked he.

"Ill, Mr. Gerald!—very ill! Try to bear up! The worst must come: you must know the worst, if I don't tell you. My poor dear master, sir—is dead."

The sudden shock was too much. The youth's brain reeled: he fell on the hall floor in a swoon. When he recovered, he inquired into the circumstances of his uncle's death, and heaped bitter reproaches upon himself as being the cause of it. He staggered to the room where the dead man lay, kissed his icy cold forehead, and rubbed his dear lifeless hands between his own, as if to try and warm them. Big tears dropped from his eyes on to the pale skin of the corpse. He called the dead man by his name; and, in a heart-rending voice, prayed to him to forgive him.

It was hours before he could realise the fact that no sound would evermore be uttered by those dear lips again—those dear lips that had spoken to him so tenderly, admonished him so mildly, sung him to sleep when he was a little child; that no more would he feel the grasp of that loved hand; that those eyes, with their rigid death-stare, would no longer smile

lovingly upon him. At last, some friends who had arrived were forced to drag him from the chamber. They thought that he would have gone mad with grief. After the funeral was over, and it was discovered that the old gentleman had left the whole of his fortune to his cousin, a friend invited him to stay at his house until he had decided on the profession or way of life which he intended to pursue.

As soon as this woman, who had been the cause of the quarrel which had ended so disastrously to both the uncle and nephew, heard of the change in Gerard's fortune, she wrote to him a polite note, in which she stated that she desired to break off the engagement, as she was certain that their dispositions were too widely different for them ever to get on happily together, and requested him to return her letters. Gerald received this, with a packet containing all the passionate epistles, the outpourings of his poor, young heart, that he had addressed to her. She did not return his presents; perhaps she kept them for old acquaintance sake. His eyes were opened at last. He did not rage much. He was so deeply grieved at the loss of his uncle, that

this extra trouble scarcely added to his sorrow. At last he saw the worthlessness of the woman. He saw that the watchful eye of that kind creature, now lying in the silent grave, had pierced through the thin shell of tinsel, that coat of external beauty, and had judged rightly of the vile soul within. He called himself ass, fool, and every bad name he could think of, for not taking his uncle's advice. He wondered how he could have been such an idiot as not to have seen through her himself. He remembered all the tricks and artifices which she played upon him ; all the false fondness which she had lavished upon him. He was disgusted. He recalled innumerable incidents to his mind, which showed, plain as life and death, that the woman had not one particle of love for him in her.

“Why had he not listened to the counsel of his dear uncle ? Then, that kind old friend would have been living now !” There was no bad feeling against his uncle, in his heart, on account of the new will that he had made ; he knew that it was but an act of passion ; he knew that the soul that had departed had loved him as dearly as ever when anger had

so overpowered it, as to cause it to disinherit him. He was sure that his uncle's last thought was of him; that his mind must have been fearfully distressed by the conflict between love and passion which had embittered his last moments—that conflict of emotions which had brought about the fatal result. His soul had been torn asunder by them, and life driven from his body.

The memory of the old man's goodness, of his affection, of his many acts of kindness, was the young man's chief consolation. The tender words of friends did not soothe as much as the remembrance of the one that was no more. He mourned his loss, and gained new life from his memory. "What mattered it to him who inherited his uncle's wealth, now that he no more had his affection? He was young and strong; he would work for his living, like many others, better than himself, had to do. Work would deaden his sorrow. He would be a man—a man that dear dead one would have been proud of." These were the thoughts that passed through his mind, as he collected the faithless woman's letters and tied them up.

He despatched them by the next post. He

had now done with her, and with all that belonged to her. Some time after, she married a wealthy old rascal, blessed with the gout and a brace of mistresses, and she soon acquired a considerable reputation as a woman of gallantry; for although she had no love in her—well, the least said about her the better; she is not a pleasing specimen of womankind.

Gerald sat down and considered how he should earn his bread. He was a good musician and a tolerable linguist; so it is no wonder that his first thoughts were of music and teaching. He soon threw those ideas aside; he would not turn to either of those callings, unless as a last resource,—they were too precarious. Then the professions entered his head; but neither medicine nor the Church suited his taste, and the occupation of a briefless barrister was too expensive for a man that only had a few hundreds, and even these would have to be borrowed from his friend, who had generously offered to advance him any sum that he might require. Besides, a profession would entail a long noviciate. He did not know what course to take. He went to bed with his mind agitated by thoughts of his dead



uncle, his faithless mistress, and of his future. The next morning, as he was dressing, he turned over project after project in his mind, and dismissed them one after another as soon as they were formed. He wanted to be independent of pecuniary aid. He felt deeply grateful to his friend for his proffered assistance; but he was resolved not to accept it, if possible.

All at once the thought of commerce shot across his brain. He thought his friend might be able to get him a situation in a city house. He communicated his desire to his host, who said that he thought he could help him, as one of his oldest friends was a successful city merchant; they had not met very frequently of late years, but he had no doubt his friend would do all in his power for Gerald. The successful city merchant was Mr. Maynard.

Gerald's friend at once posted off to his office, told him the young man's story, and asked his aid. The merchant appeared interested in the recital, and, at the end, said,—

“Poor fellow! It was very unlucky for him to lose a fortune; but he may consider himself fortunate in not having married that

woman. I know what misery it is to have a woman like that for a wife, to love her, to think she loves you, and to find yourself deceived," added he, with bitterness. "He may hope for happiness now. The world is before him, and he is young; but, with such a horrid burden as he would have had tied to his back, nothing but wretchedness and a broken heart would have been in store for him." His friend looked at him as if he did not understand the meaning of this sudden ebullition. "I feel quite an interest in him already," continued the merchant. "I want a gentlemanly young fellow as a sort of confidential clerk. If he likes to accept the place, he can have it. The salary is eighty pounds for the first year."

The friend thanked him warmly, and hurried to Gerald with the glad tidings. Boyne accepted the proposal without a moment's hesitation. The salary was very small compared with the liberal allowance which he had received from his uncle; but he knew that it would be folly to expect more—indeed, he did not expect as much—at first, as he was entirely ignorant of business. He had also heard of

the very small salaries that clerks receive. He considered himself fortunate; so did his friend. The next day he had an interview with Mr. Maynard. All was settled satisfactorily; and he agreed to enter upon his new duties at once. The merchant had made a favourable impression on Gerald; and Gerald had made a favourable impression on the merchant.

The young man next looked about him for a cheap lodging. After hunting about for some time, he secured a small parlour-floor in the neighbourhood of Islington; and thither he removed, in spite of the earnest solicitations of his friend to make his house his home, at any rate for the present. He wished to have a place to call his own, however humble it might be. His apartments consisted of two nice, cosy little rooms, which were very well furnished, considering the very moderate rental (thirteen shillings a week) that was demanded for them. The sitting-room window looked into the narrow street; the bedroom window into a small yard, attached to the house, and separating it from a lane behind. Everything was scrupulously clean, except the servant—she was a regular little slavey. But she seemed

very willing and good-tempered, notwithstanding the great accumulation of dirt about her.

In the centre of the sitting-room there was an oval table—a trifle rickety, perhaps; large enough to accommodate four with ease—covered by a red cloth, which was spotted with ink in several places, and which bore traces of grease. There were one or two rips that had been neatly mended, visible to the eye. The carpet was old and dirty, but not torn; it was impossible for Gerald to discover its original colour or pattern. The landlady promised her new lodger that, if he would make use of the spittoon (which was by the side of the fender), and not of the carpet—like most of the former occupants had done—she would soon replace the old carpet by a new one. Over the mantel-shelf was a small looking-glass, which returned to the eyes of its astounded gazers such lengthened images of their countenances as to make them almost believe that they had been suddenly flattened between two deal boards. Resting on the shelf, and in front of the lower border of this magic mirror, were two small china figures of a boy and a girl, dressed like Italian peasants;

between these was a cheap timepiece, flanked on either side by two cigar-ash dishes; and near each end of the shelf was placed a glass vase containing pipe-lights.

In the recess on one side of the fire-place was a large crayon drawing of an old gentleman, who had evidently put on his Sunday clothes to sit for his likeness. This, the little slavey afterwards informed Gerald, was a picture of missus's par! In the recess on the opposite side was an old-fashioned piano. The new lodger passed his hand over a few of the keys, and discovered that about two out of every three were mute; and that the speaking-notes were so cracked and discordant, that it would have been better if they had been dummies also. Against the wall, opposite the fire-place, was a couch covered with horsehair, which presented two or three long slits to the eyes of the beholder. About the room were placed five good, strong, old-fashioned chairs, with leather-covered seats, and a very comfortable easy-chair. A few framed plates and silhouettes ornamented the walls, which were covered by a dark red paper. On one side of the window stood a chiffonier; and on the

wall, on the opposite side, were several books. This room opened into the bedroom by a couple of folding-doors.

Gerald spent the first evening in his new quarters in arranging his books, putting away his clothes, and nailing up a couple of pipe-racks. People usually like to know something of the other inmates of a house; our young friend was not exempt from this curiosity. So, the next morning, whilst the maid was laying his cloth for breakfast, he put a few adroit questions, and elicited the required information. She was a slovenly, little, fat roll of a wench, dressed in a dirty print gown and a ragged apron. Her face was greasy; her untidy hair was surmounted by a cap which some time or other had been white; and her hands looked as if they had not been washed for a month. He learned from her that the family—the master and mistress and the children—occupied the two top bedrooms and the room below his; that the first floor was let to a medical student, who was rather noisy; and that the second floor was inhabited by a gentleman in the Customs, who was a great friend of the first-floor lodger; that the

landlady was a very hard-working woman, cross sometimes, but oftener pleasant than cross; and that her husband, who measured tape in a draper's shop close by, was given to drink, and was a great trouble to his wife on certain occasions.

He ate his breakfast, and started hurriedly for the city.

## *FIRST DAY IN THE CITY.*

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### CHAPTER III.

#### FIRST DAY IN THE CITY.

JUST as he entered the office, the clock struck ten. He asked for Mr. Maynard, and was shown into his private room. The merchant had not yet arrived; so Gerald took off his hat and gloves, sat down in a chair, and read the newspapers that were on the table. In about a quarter of an hour his employer entered.

“You’re here, then?” said he, shaking hands with him. “I must introduce you to my chief clerk.”

He touched a bell. Mr. Crummerton entered.

“Please ask Mr. Josephs to come to me, Mr. Crummerton.”

An elderly man, with a pen behind his ear, soon presented himself.



"Mr. Josephs—Mr. Boyne. The young gentleman I spoke to you about yesterday," said the merchant. Mr. Josephs and Mr. Boyne bowed to each other. "You will do me a great favour if you will give him all the assistance you can," added Mr. Maynard, after the introduction was over.

Mr. Josephs replied that he would be only too happy to render him all the assistance in his power; and Gerald thanked him for his kindness.

"You'll show him his desk when he comes out. I have just a few words to say to him now," said Mr. Maynard.

Mr. Josephs bowed and retired.

Mr. Maynard gave Boyne a bundle of letters, and instructed him how to answer them.

"Now, my young friend," said he, after he had finished his explanations, "that will be your chief work for the present. By-and-by, if you keep your eyes open well, and learn how the markets run, I shall give you something else to do. Now, go into the office, and find Mr. Josephs. He's a nice, mild sort of man, a regular old poker over figures; not quite the style of man you have been used to associate

with. But you will like him. He's a good, honest fellow. He's been many years with me, and I hope he'll be many more years with me. I believe the only idea in that man's brain is business ; but he works it out well ! As to the other clerks, you must form your own opinion about them. I don't know much of them, except from a commercial point of view. As long as they do my work well, I retain them—that is, provided they like my salaries. Now, go, for I've a lot of things to attend to. I hope you'll get on well with our friends outside." The merchant dismissed his new clerk with a smile.

Gerald espied the old clerk at a desk near one of the windows ; he was poring over a large ledger. The other clerks looked up from their books and stared at the young man.

"Mr. Josephs," said Gerald, touching that gentleman's arm, "will you be kind enough to show me my desk?"

"Eh ! Oh, yes !" replied the old clerk, getting off his stool. He was a tall, gaunt man, with a bald head and a long, thin, grey-whiskered face, from which projected a nose with a very high bridge. His eyes were large

and prominent. He was attired in grey trousers and an alpaca jacket. "Yes, certainly, Mr. Boyne. But put your hat on one of those pegs there, and your gloves in your pocket—gloves are easily lost!" After he had seen Gerald perform these operations, he walked with him to an unoccupied desk. "There," continued he "that is your desk, Mr. Boyne; and there is the key. Mind and always lock it before you leave in the evening. If you want to know anything about your work, come to me, and I shall be most happy to show you." Gerald again thanked him. "But," added the old clerk, "I may as well introduce you to the gentlemen on each side of you." The gentlemen on each side, who had been pretending to be writing, but who had really been taking "stock" of the new comer, at once turned their eyes towards him. "Mr. Crampton—Mr. Boyne." Mr. Josephs indicated a good-looking young man by a motion with his right hand. "Mr. Baker—Mr. Boyne." Mr. Josephs's left hand was stretched out towards a gentleman with a very long moustache.

Both these gentlemen said that they were very

happy to make Mr. Boyne's acquaintance. The old clerk departed, and Gerald settled down to write his letters. He did not find his work very troublesome. By-and-by, he observed one of the gentlemen by his side, Mr. Baker, leave his desk and enter into an earnest whispering conversation with two clerks on the opposite side of the room. After a while, he returned to his place, trying hard to suppress a series of chuckles.

"Very nice fellow, Maynard, isn't he?" said he to Boyne.

"Yes," replied Boyne.

"You're sure to get on well with him, if you attend to your work."

"Indeed!" replied Gerald; he did not care to be interrupted.

"I say," said Mr. Baker, in a confidential tone, "you know it's customary for a fellow, when he first enters an office, to stand treat all round?"

Gerald replied that he did not; but that, if it were, he would do it.

"Most fellows stand 'cham.,'" suggested Mr. Baker.

"Then I shan't," answered Gerald. "My salary won't run to 'cham.'"

Mr. Baker looked rather discomfited.

"Mr. Boyne, please come to me for a moment," cried Mr. Josephs from his desk.

Boyne went to him.

"Confound old Josephs!" said Mr. Baker to Mr. Crampton. "He sees that we are trying to gammon the fellow."

"You'd have got 'cham.,' if you'd tried a little harder," growled Mr. Crampton. "Why didn't you tell him that he'd soon be able to make it up out of his screw; that one or two days on sausage-rolls would soon set him straight again?"

"Because I didn't think of it."

"You never do. I'll warrant, now old Josephs has him, we shall only get gin."

"They want you to treat them, don't they?" asked Josephs of Boyne.

"Yes."

"I thought so. They suggested champagne, of course?" The old clerk gave a knowing wink with one of his prominent eyes.

"They did," replied Gerald; "and I told them my salary wouldn't stand it."

"Quite right. Never waste your money on fellows that don't care a rap for you. They'd

get all the liquors they could out of you, and then you could go to the dogs for all they cared. Still," added the old man, "it will be more pleasant for you, as you have to meet them every day, to keep friendly with them. 'Old Tom' is cheap. Stand them a couple of bottles of gin."

"I suppose I shall have to drink with them?" said Boyne.

"Of course,—else they'd be offended; unless you're a teetotaller."

"I am not a temperance man."

"Then you must join them," replied Josephs, decisively.

"Well, I don't like gin," remonstrated Boyne.

"Then you'd better provide whiskey," said the old clerk; "that's not much dearer. Eight of us! I'll tell Samson—that's our porter—to bring in a couple of bottles of Irish. Don't you buy any cigars. The fellows are sure to have tobacco and pipes in their pockets. Cigars are wasted on them—unless they are 'Pickwicks.' By - the - bye," continued the old gentleman, "where do you intend to dine?"

"I don't know," replied Boyne.

"Then you come with me. I'll show you where to get a good dinner tolerably cheap. You come out with me at one."

"You dine at one!" exclaimed Gerald, in surprise.

"Yes," replied the old gentleman. "What time do you dine?"

"Half-past six or seven generally," answered Gerald.

The old gentleman opened his eyes wider than ever.

"You'll have to leave off that. No young clerk's purse can stand that sort of thing. It's all very well for governors and swells; but it doesn't do for juniors, unless they have private property."

"Then I have not," replied Gerald, smiling.

"Then you give up late dinners," said the old clerk.

"I am very much obliged to you for instructing me in the ways of the city. You don't object to my dining with you at one o'clock?"

"Certainly not, or I should not have asked you," replied Mr. Josephs. "Now you had

better go back to your work. Mind," he held up his pen at Boyne, "don't let those fellows gammon you into champagne."

Gerald smiled, and withdrew to his own desk again. Mr. Baker and Mr. Crampton now and then addressed a few observations to him on ordinary subjects. He answered them shortly, and gave them to understand that he was not much inclined to converse with them. When his letters were finished, he took them to Mr. Maynard. That gentleman was quite satisfied, and gave him another bundle to answer. When one o'clock came, he saw Mr. Josephs beckoning to him. Gerald arose, put his papers into his desk, and took down his hat from its peg.

"Why, you've no office coat!" remarked Mr. Josephs, who had taken off his alpaca jacket, and was buttoning up a black frock.

"No," replied Gerald. "Is it usual to have an office coat?"

"Rather so, unless you particularly want a good coat to get greasy at the elbows in a fortnight," answered Mr. Josephs. "Bring an old coat here to-morrow—as old a one as you have by you."



Gerald replied that he would.

"You've no umbrella!" exclaimed Josephs, with an air of profound astonishment.

"No; it's a fine day," said Boyne.

"Yes; but there's no knowing how long it will continue fine. I certainly did think that you would have brought an umbrella. But," he added, with a faint smile, "what right had I to expect that a man who could forget an office coat would remember an umbrella? Always carry an umbrella, young man. If you leave it at home, it is sure to rain; and if you carry it, it is sure to be fine; therefore always bring it. Besides, it answers the purpose of a walking-stick in fine weather."

Mr. Josephs took his own umbrella in his hand, and walked out of the office, followed by Boyne.

They proceeded through several streets, the old clerk giving hints to his young companion all the way, and raising his voice to such a high pitch that it threatened to drown the stamping of horses, the rolling of waggons, and the din of human tongues that deafened poor Gerald's ears. At last they entered a nice-looking tavern.

"We'll go to the grill-room," said Mr. Josephs.

They walked through the bar to the grill-room. It was a long room, with rows of dining-tables on each side; and a large fire was burning in the range at the further end of the apartment, at which the cook was busily engaged in turning chops and steaks. A waiter pulled out two chairs from under one of the tables for them.

"No," said Josephs, taking hold of Gerald's arm as he was about to sit down; "come and choose your meat first."

They walked up to the cook, who was dressed in a white cap and blouse.

"Good day, cook," said Mr. Josephs to that individual.

"Good day, sir," replied the culinary official, giving his white cap a pull forwards. "What shall I have the pleasure of doing for you to-day, sir?"

"I think I'll take a steak. What will you take?" asked the old clerk of Boyne.

Boyne replied that he would have a steak.

"Then I may as well choose for us both," said Josephs.

Gerald acquiesced. Mr. Josephs accompanied the cook to inspect the steaks.

"There," said he, after he had selected two, "those will do well enough. You know how I like mine done—just pink. How do you like yours?" inquired he of Boyne.

"Pretty well done," replied Gerald.

"Have potatoes, I suppose?"

"Yes, please."

"Then steaks and potatoes for two, cook—that will be the order."

He slipped twopence into the man's hand, and then sat down at one of the tables. Our young friend seated himself opposite to him.

"When you go to a grill-room you are always expected to give the cook a penny or twopence; remember that," remarked the old gentleman, taking up a newspaper. "These cooks ought to make their fortunes, if their masters did not make them pay so much for their places."

He occupied himself with the newspaper until the steaks and potatoes were brought.

"What will you take to drink?" inquired he of Boyne; then, without waiting for an answer, he added,—“I shall take stout—a

threepenny glass of stout. Never take stout in half-pints or ordinary glasses. The ordinary glass holds less than a half-pint, and it decidedly isn't worth paying twopence for less than a half-pint, when you can get a half-pint for the same money; and, when you can get nearly a pint for threepence, who would pay twopence for a half-pint?"

Boyne said that he would take a threepenny glass of stout.

"Two threepenny glasses of stout, waiter," shouted Mr. Josephs.

The waiter brought them, and the old clerk took a good draught.

"Good stuff, isn't it?" said he, as he replaced his glass upon the table.

"Yes," replied Boyne.

"One glass of this is quite enough for a man that has to work all the afternoon," remarked the old clerk.

They finished their steaks and potatoes.

"I'm going to have some bread-and-cheese," said Josephs. "I suppose you'll want some pastry?"

"I don't care about any. I think I'll have bread-and-cheese."

"Humph. I thought you would have preferred pastry. Youngsters generally do like pastry." Mr. Josephs brought out the word "pastry" in a very contemptuous manner. "Waiter, two goes of bread-and-cheese."

The bread-and-cheese was brought and soon finished. Mr. Josephs took another glance at the paper, and then said that it was time for them to return to the office. "We'd better settle," exclaimed he. "Cook, 2*d.*; steaks, 2*s.*; two lots of potatoes, 4*d.*; two breads, 2*d.*; two cheeses, 4*d.*; two stouts, 6*d.*; waiter, 4*d.*; total, 3*s.* 10*d.* Divide by two, gives 1*s.* 11*d.* each; and your stomach fairly filled for the money, I think."

Gerald handed over his share, and replied that he thought it was.

"Keep a book, Mr. Boyne," exclaimed Josephs, holding his pocket-book up before Gerald's eyes. "Keep a book. Put down all your expenditure, and then you are likely to keep your debtor and creditor sides square."

They arose from their seats. A man came towards them with a brush in his hand. Josephs snatched both their hats from off the pegs on which they hung, and said, in a low

voice, to his companion,—“Follow me out quickly.”

When they reached the street, Gerald asked him the meaning of his haste.

“Why,” exclaimed the old man, chuckling, “didn’t you see that fellow with a brush in his hand? He’d have brushed our coats, and have extracted another penny from each of us. A penny a day is three hundred and sixty-five pence a year, you know. That’s something. No, not for Josephs. I can always brush my own coat. There are sure to be hosts of those loafers about dining-rooms. If you believe me, at some places, the fellow that takes the money charges a penny for holding out his hand to receive it. It’s a swindle. I wonder the fellows don’t rise in rebellion against such odious customs.” The old gentleman blew his nose with great violence. By this time, they had reached the entrance of the office.

“Not a bad youngster,” remarked Mr. Josephs to himself, as he put on his alpaca coat. “No airs—not at all cocky, and not priggish!”

Mr. Maynard left at half-past five.

Josephs at once ordered Samson, the porter,

to fetch two bottles of Irish whiskey. In a few minutes he came back with them in his hand.

"Now get some cold water, and all the glasses you can muster," said the old gentleman.

The porter arranged several glasses of all sorts and sizes on the table in the middle of the room.

"Come, gentlemen!" exclaimed Mr. Josephs, who was drawing the cork from one of the spirit-bottles. "Let us drink to the inauguration of Mr. Boyne!"

The clerks immediately seated themselves around the table, some on stools, and some on chairs; and one gentleman, the junior of the office, had to content himself with an old basket turned upside down.

"As Mr. Boyne provides the liquor, it is only right that he should have the largest glass," said Josephs, as he placed the bottle and a very large tumbler before him; then he stooped and whispered—"Take a good lot; they won't let the bottle pass down here again. That fellow, Crummerton, will keep it at his end of the table. I believe that fellow could drink the sea dry!"

Gerard took his advice. The old clerk next helped himself to a pretty strong glass, and then passed on the bottle to his left-hand neighbour, who happened to be Mr. Crampton. The party was seven in number. By the time the bottle had gone round it was three parts empty. The old porter had stood at a little distance watching them.

"Ah," said Josephs, "we 'd nearly forgotten you, Samson! Where's your glass?"

"Ain't no more glasses," answered the porter; "but 'ere's a corfee-cup!"

He held it out towards the party.

"Well that 'll do as well as a glass, won't it, Sammy?" said Mr. Baker, laughing.

"Yes, when you puts the 'short' in it!" replied the man, grinning.

"Crummerton," said Mr. Crampton, "fill Mr. Samson's glass."

The sally was greeted by a burst of laughter.

Crummerton, who had held fast to the bottle, poured a small quantity into the porter's cup.

"Here, that isn't fair!" remarked one.

"Give the old fellow more."

"Yes," exclaimed Josephs, authoritatively,—

"give him a good dose!"



"Give him a good dose!" cried one and all.

Crummerton sulkily complied with the general desire.

"I was afraid I should make the old buffer tight," he remarked, by way of apology.

His friend Bill indulged in a sniggle.

"You were afraid there wouldn't be enough left for you to get tight on, yourself," retorted one of his companions.

"Silence!—no squabbles!" exclaimed Josephs, rapping his hand upon the table. •

Mr. Crummerton cast an angry glance at his companion, but did not reply.

"Thanks to you, gentlemen," said the porter, as he raised his cup to his lips. "Your health, Mr. Boyne! Long life and happiness to you, sir; and may you never regret becoming a member of the house of Maynard!"

"Hear! hear!" roared the clerks, rapping the bottoms of their glasses on the table.

"Three cheers for Mr. Samson's speech!"

After the uproar had subsided, Gerald told the old porter that he was infinitely obliged to him for his good wishes, drew out his cigar-case, and offered him a cigar, which Mr.

Samson accepted with a low bow. Boyne then held out his case towards Josephs.

"No," said the old clerk, shaking his head, and pushing Gerald's arm away. "We none of us smoke cigars. We're too great swells to smoke cigars!" Then he whispered,—*"By holy Moses, put your cigar-case away this instant, or it will be emptied in a twink! They'll flock around you as thickly as bees in a hive, at the sight of a well-filled cigar-case!"*

Our young friend replaced his cigar-case in his pocket, and took out his pipe and tobacco-pouch.

"Confounded old ass!" said Crummerton to his comrade, Bill.

"He's chiselled us out of the duffer's cigars!"

"He's a regular old moke! He's not fit for the society of young fellows," replied Bill.

"I should like to see him in the workhouse! He's always spoiling the fun. We should have got 'cham.' out of the blooming softy, if it hadn't been for him!" muttered Crummerton, savagely.

Boyne filled his pipe, and lighted it. Most of the others were already smoking.

"H'm!" whispered Crummerton, sniffing up the smoke. "That's deuced good tobacco of the new 'un's! Best honey-dew, I'll warrant. I'll have some of that!" Then he said aloud to Gerald, "I say, Boyne, that's very good tobacco you've got! Where do you buy it?"

"Would you like to try a pipe?" replied Boyne.

"Well, I don't mind! Thank you, I will!"

Boyne tossed him his pouch.

Mr. Crummerton filled his pipe and his friend Bill's pipe, and, after secretly putting three or four more pipefuls of this exquisite honey-dew into his own pouch, returned Gerald what remained of his tobacco.

"Humph!" muttered Josephs, "They've soon lightened your pouch for you!"

A pleasant-looking man, of twenty-eight or thirty, got up from his seat and made preparations for departing.

"What, you off, Toope!" exclaimed the gentleman named Bill.

"Yes," replied Mr. Toope, putting on his hat.

"Why don't you stay, and have another glass, man?" said Mr. Crummerton.

"I can't to-night," answered Mr. Toope.

“Ha! ha!” exclaimed Crummerton, with a coarse laugh, “Toope’s afraid of his wife!”

“He! he!” Bravo, Crummy! That’s it!” said Mr. Bill.

“She’d fidget herself if I did not reach home by the usual time,” said the married clerk, blushing slightly.

“Break her in, then: stay out late every night for a week! Go home drunk!” roared Mr. Crummerton.

“When I want your advice, Crummerton, I’ll ask for it!” replied Toope, in a determined manner. Then he raised his hat to the rest of the party, wished them good evening, and departed.

“Toope is married now, and no mistake!” exclaimed Mr. Crummerton, with a broad grin. “Can’t stay an hour after his time, without giving his wife notice beforehand, or, perhaps, asking her consent! I knew how it would be when he tried so hard to get the widow’s little boy into the free school. He had to go and see her so often on business, that I knew he would fall in love with her. The moment I heard that the husband had left him executor, I said to myself, ‘Crummy, old boy, poor

Toope is booked! The widow will catch him as sure as eggs is eggs. Toope is impressionable; the widow is pretty: the widow will be Mrs. Toope before two years pass over thy youthful brow!' And she was Mrs. Toope, too, in less than eighteen months after the death of her first. No more nightly rambles now, Toope! No more trotting into every pub. from the Bank to Charing Cross! No jolly larks now! Toope is married—and hen-pecked, too! He used to be the best post-horn blower on the top of the 'bus. Nobody could make as much row with it as Toope. I'll warrant the late sleepers blessed the day when Toope got spliced. Many's the curse he's drawn from their lips with his shrill blasts. Given the 'bus up now, and the horn, too! He walks in, and walks out. All shanks's mare now! And he scarcely has a liquor during the blessed day. No money for cigars, now. Well, we did have a lark at his wedding! I did get tight. I had a presentiment that that would be the last time that I should ever get skriffy at his expense. Poor old Toope's jolly days are all gone. That's matrimony, is it? Blowed if I'll ever get spliced! He's cut all

his old friends—never asks me down to spend an evening with him.”

“Toope has too much respect for his wife to introduce her to a sot,” remarked Mr. Crampton.

“Who’s a sot?” asked Crummerton, in an angry voice.

“You!” replied Crampton, boldly.

Crummerton sprang up from his seat, and would have rushed at Crampton, had not the others held him back.

“Do you mean to insult me, sir?” bawled he, struggling to free himself from the numerous hands that held him.

“Do sit down and be quiet, Crummy!” said Bill, who was grasping his coat-tails.

“I won’t be quiet; I won’t sit down!” roared the infuriated little snob. “If you don’t apologize, Mr. Crampton—apologize in the very humblest terms—for the insult which you have flung at me, I’ll knock your head off.”

He banged the fist of one hand against the palm of the other. His ugly countenance looked perfectly hideous in its rage; the furious glare in his small eyes was something awful to behold. Gerald thought that, if the

little man owed him a grudge, he should not like to meet him alone on a dark night, unless he were perfectly well armed.

"Apologize, indeed!" exclaimed Crampton. "I'll give you a good licking for your insolence, if you don't look out. All here know that, when I called you sot, I uttered plain unvarnished truth. In fact, everybody knows that you're an utter blackguard."

Mr. Crampton leaned forward, looked straight in Crummerton's face, and uttered this in the coolest manner possible. Mr. Crummerton shook his fist at his adversary, and made a desperate effort to release himself. Crampton replied by calling him a coward, and by making a contemptuous gesture with his lips at him.

The old clerk now interfered.

"Silence, gentlemen! Order!" cried he, rising, and stretching out his hands. "The debate is getting too fiery—it must be checked. This language is most unparliamentary. If it does not cease at once, I shall be under the painful necessity of turning you both out into the corridor to finish your dispute alone, and in whatsoever manner you may think fit—with your fists, if you like; only

understand, I will have no displays of assault and battery here. I will not have the conviviality of the evening disturbed by any fighting. Sit down, Mr. Crummerton: sit down, Mr. Crampton!"

The two gentlemen reluctantly obeyed. A sullen kind of peace reigned between them. Mr. Crampton laughed and chatted to the companion beside him; Mr. Crummerton joked and related anecdotes to his friend Bill: the jokes and the anecdotes must have been very funny, for that worthy tipped his chair back and roared with laughter. The party was getting comfortable again.

"Let's have a song!" exclaimed Baker. "I knock down our honoured friend, Mr. Josephs, for a song!"

"Then you won't get one," replied that old gentleman, drily.

"We will have it! We must have it! A song from Mr. Josephs!" shouted all.

The old clerk smiled, and looked as if he were inclined to gratify their request.

"Silence for Mr. Josephs's song!" cried Baker.

"Well, I suppose I must give you one," said the old clerk, "or there will be no



peace for me. Well, gentlemen, it's 'The Brave Old Oak!'

He sang the song very fairly for a man of his age. It was rapturously encored, and he was obliged to repeat the last verse three times. Mr. Crummerton then favoured the company with several popular comic songs and one or two negro monologues. The applause which his efforts elicited completely succeeded in restoring his good temper.

Some gentleman was mentioned by one of the party as an excellent accountant.

"Ha!" said Mr. Josephs, taking his pipe from his mouth, and shaking his head solemnly, "the best accountant I ever knew was poor George Trevor. He was a one! He could unravel anything, no matter how complicated. Poor fellow! he's been dead sixteen years now. It was all owing to his wife." The old gentleman sighed.

"What was owing to his wife?" asked Crampton.

"Why, his death, of course," answered Josephs.

"Ha! ha! Shows what matrimony brings a man to!" exclaimed Crummerton.

“How did his death occur?” asked Boyne of the old clerk.

“Mrs. Trevor,” replied he, “was a very extravagant woman. She had high notions, and always wanted to live in a grander style than Trevor could afford. Trevor, poor easy man, told her often that they were overrunning the constable, and that they could not go on at that rate long. Well, she wouldn’t believe it. She denied that they were living beyond their income, would not listen to a word he said, and flew into violent tantrums if ever the poor man hinted that money was going out faster than it came in. She was a handsome woman, but an awful termagant. By-and-by, the tradesmen clamoured for what was due to them; and Trevor borrowed at a high rate of interest to keep them quiet, if only for the time. His affairs got into a precious mess; the dunning commenced again. His difficulties got to the knowledge of his employers, who dismissed him from his situation. Soon after, he was arrested for debt, and taken to Whitecross Street. His wife had to go back to her friends. She began to see, for the first time, that it was her folly that had brought about

her husband's ruin. Trevor went through the court, and obtained his release. After he left the debtors' prison, Mrs. Trevor's friends, who were well-to-do people, kindly allowed him to stay with them until he could find suitable employment. His wife had lost all her pride now: there was no domineering, or raving, or hysterical sobbing. She begged the poor man's forgiveness, and blamed herself as the cause of all his disasters; she did her best to cheer his broken spirit, to make hope once more live within him. He used to tramp about the city all day, hunting for a berth. At last he became quite disheartened, and sank into a low melancholy. One night, very late, his wife sent to my lodgings to know if he was with me, as he had not returned home. I called at the house the next morning, to inquire if he had come back. The servant told me that he had not. I guessed at once that something was wrong with him. Knowing his mental condition, I suspected what really turned out to be the truth. I went round to all the police-stations to make inquiries; but I could get no information. In the evening I called on Mrs. Trevor; her husband was still

absent. Poor thing, what a terrible state of suspense she was in! It was quite awful to see her. One moment she would be upbraiding herself, and the next worrying her poor, troubled brain by imaginations about the fate of her husband. She listened eagerly for every knock or ring, and rushed out into the passage directly she heard any one at the door. The next day I went with a policeman to all the dead-houses in London. He was not there. I had him advertised in all the newspapers, but it was no good; he could not be found. About a week after, as I was taking my tea, on my return from business, a policeman called on me. He informed me that a man, wearing similar clothes to those mentioned in Trevor's description, had been found dead in an empty house, not far from the one in which his wife was staying. I accompanied him to the spot. There was a crowd of people assembled around the steps, and two policemen were keeping guard at the door. I followed the constable into a room on the ground-floor. There, in the centre, lay the body of a man. At a glance I could tell that the clothes were those that my friend had worn when I last saw him; he called at

my office on the afternoon of the very day on which he was first missed. He seemed dreadfully desponding. I looked at the face of the corpse. Yes, it was Trevor's face! In spite of the discoloration, I was certain that it was Trevor's face. There was a rope tied in a noose around his neck. The policeman said that the other end had been attached to the handrail at the top of the staircase. It appeared that he had gone to the people who had the letting of the house, and asked for the key of it. Only a young daughter was at home; she gave it to him, and afterwards forgot to tell her parents that a gentleman had called about the house, until other inquiries were made concerning it. Then poor Trevor was discovered hanging from the stair-head! I had a terrible time of it when I broke it to his wife. She was frantic with grief; for she loved the man, although she was such an extravagant fool. About two years after, she married a rich old bachelor. Perhaps it was the best thing she could do. Poor Trevor was a wonderful accountant," added the old man, sorrowfully.

"But he died in a different line," suggested Mr. Crummerton.

His friend giggled "He, he, he!" but was speedily silenced by a dig in the ribs from his next neighbour. Josephs was too much occupied with the remembrance of his friend's sad end to notice Mr. Crummerton's unseemly jest. The rest of the party felt angry, but could not help smiling.

Mr. Crummerton was getting rather tipsy. He had taken a good many "drinks" with his various friends during the day, and had mixed his liquors pretty considerably. The second whiskey-bottle was empty.

"This one's a dead man! Who'll toss for another?" inquired the worthy Mr. Crummerton.

No one replied.

"I feel as if I could drink forty blooming whiskeys more," continued Crummerton.

No one spoke; his friend Bill gave a gentle "He! he!"

Mr. Crummerton then began to talk on racing matters. He offered to bet with everybody; but no one would bet with him.

"Well!" exclaimed he at last, "you ain't going to have any more whiskey, then?"

"No," replied Mr. Josephs.

"It's 'anged slow: I shall budge!" said his vulgar colleague.

The whole party arose, and left the office.

"What's the time, Bill?" asked Mr. Crummerton, as they were wishing each other good-evening in the street.

"I don't know," replied Bill. "My watch is at the maker's."

"Like mine, you mean," remarked Mr. Crummerton, with a knowing wink; "at my respected relation's—mine uncle's!"

The two worthies laughed heartily at this old joke.

"It's seven," said Boyne, looking at his watch.

"Thank you," said Mr. Crummerton. "I'm glad somebody has a ticker; it keeps up the respectability of the party. What d'ye say to some more lush and a finish at the Grand Cham?"

The drunken little snob slipped his arm through Gerald's.

"No, thank you," exclaimed Gerald, freeing himself. He could not bear to be touched by the fellow.

"Well, then, you're a good sort of fellow. I

like you, although you didn't stand 'cham.' What d'ye say to going home to my diggings, and making a night of it?"

He placed his horrid hand on Boyne's shoulder.

"No. Good-night," answered Boyne, moving away from him in disgust.

"Beastly, proud fellow! We ain't good enough for him. What did he come into the city for, then?"

Turning over this profound problem in his mind, Mr. Crummerton departed, leaning on the arm of his friend Bill.

Gerald wished Josephs good-night, and hastened to his lodgings in Islington. He tried to read, but soon threw down the book; he was in no humour for reading. Then he sat down at the rickety, old piano, and attempted one of Beethoven's sonatas on it; the excruciating noise which the instrument gave forth soon made him desist. He arose from the music-stool, lighted his pipe, and paced up and down the room, thinking over his first day's work and the persons with whom it had brought him into contact—Mr. Maynard, kind old Josephs, the cad, Crummerton, and his comrade, Bill.



## CHAPTER IV.

## A LESSON IN BOOK-KEEPING.

A FEW days after, Josephs overheard Boyne asking one of the clerks if he could tell him the best way to obtain a knowledge of book-keeping. The advice he received was to buy a treatise on the practice of the art, and to study it carefully.

“Don’t do anything of the kind,” interposed Josephs. “If you buy a book on it, you may as well burn it as read it, for all the good you will get out of it. You’ll find it filled with long words and unintelligible explanations; and when you’ve gone through it, you’ll know as much at the end as you did at the beginning. I’ll teach you how to keep books, if you like.”

Gerald gladly accepted the old gentleman’s kind proposal.

"We'll begin to-night," continued Mr. Josephs. "You come home with me, and we'll begin to grapple with the mysteries and difficulties of double entry as soon as we've had a quiet cup of tea."

Boyne accompanied the old clerk to his lodgings. They were just such rooms as imagination would create for him: they were moderately large, airy apartments, simply furnished, and with everything in them arranged with methodical precision. An old bookcase, containing volumes on devotional subjects, on commerce, and on political economy, together with a few antique novels and poems of the quiet, unstirring kind, that soothe and send the soul to sleep, but never rouse the emotions (gentle pastorals, that sing of rippling brooks, green fields, and rustic loves, sweet, sad elegies, and the like), occupied a place near the window; and opposite to it was an *escritoire*, which, with the Commercial Almanac that hung from a brass-headed nail driven into the wall at a convenient height for the eyes of a person seated at the desk, gave the room a semi-official appearance. A few plates and water-colours relieved the walls;

and over the fireplace was a picture in oils of a lady. She appeared from the portrait to be between twenty-five and thirty—that age when full womanly dignity has not long usurped the sweetness and mobility of girlhood. It was a pale, handsome countenance; the features were regular and well formed. The nose was slightly arched; the delicately curved nostrils gave an expression of pride to the face. The large, black, mournful eyes were shaded by long eyelashes; and above them were pencilled two finely arched eyebrows. The forehead was broad and rather low, and was bounded by hair of a lovely shade of brown, which terminated in two pretty curling masses in front of the ears, and reaching half-way to her gracefully sloping white shoulders. Her face, throat, and neck were beautifully rounded. The skin was of a pearly whiteness. The mouth was well shaped, but indicated weakness; the lips were rather full, and of a lovely red. Her dress was of the fashion that was worn thirty or forty years ago: its low body and short sleeves, edged with lace, disclosed the upper part of her bust, and two magnificent arms, ending in plump, taper-

fingering, white hands, tipped with pink, almond-shaped nails. On the fourth finger of the left hand was a wedding-ring. Beneath this was the miniature of a handsome young soldier, attired in a gorgeous uniform.

"Now we'll commence," exclaimed Josephs, after the servant had cleared away the tea-things. "I suppose you know which is the debtor and which the creditor side of a ledger?"

"Yes, I do know that much."

"Humph! I should not have been surprised if you had been ignorant of that, even."

The old clerk placed the inkstand in the middle of the table; then, he put paper and blot-sheets in front of him, and sat down opposite to Gerald. By a few short and clear sentences, he managed to give his pupil a general idea of the method of keeping accounts.

"Do you understand that?" inquired he, emphatically.

"Yes," replied Gerald.

"Then, if you pay proper attention to me, you won't have much difficulty in mastering

the details. They are merely matters of memory and practice."

After Mr. Josephs had made all the observations that he thought were required, and by a strict cross-examination satisfied himself that his pupil was following him, he proceeded to write out questions, at first simple, then more difficult, and to hand them over to Gerald to answer. He also made Boyne take a copy of a very useful table of foreign weights and measures that he had compiled. When the lesson was finished, he ordered supper in, and insisted on his pupil's staying until they had drunk some grog and smoked a few pipes together.

"You shan't tell the fellows at the office that old Josephs sends you home without a nightcap," remarked the old gentleman, smiling.

Gerald replied that his kindness in instructing him was what he had no right to expect, without supper and a "nightcap" added in.

"When I ask a fellow here, I like to treat him hospitably. I am neither so mean nor so poor that I can't spare a crust and a quid of tobacco for a friend. I've wine, too," added

Mr. Josephs, "if you like. But I usually only offer that to ladies when they honour me with their company."

"I prefer the grog," replied Boyne.

"That's right. Grog's best with a pipe after supper," said the old gentleman, heartily.

"That's a very handsome young man in the military uniform," said Gerald to Josephs, as he was making the grog.

"Yes," replied Josephs, "that man's life was a chapter of accidents from his birth to his death. He was an early friend of my father's. Being the illegitimate son of an Irish nobleman, that, of course, was accident number one. My father and he were at school together. After Montgomery—that was the name he went by—left school, a commission was obtained for him in the army. He proceeded with his regiment to Spain. Whilst there, he had the misfortune to be concerned, with three other officers older than himself, in a foolish prank, for which he (although the youngest and least culpable of the party) got cashiered, and the others only reprimanded. I think it was for sticking a dead priest up against a church-door. He spent all the money

he had, and then enlisted in the very regiment from which he had been cashiered. An old major, a former friend of his, recognized him when he was on sentry duty at the barrack gate one day. He had a private interview with Montgomery, and offered, as his position, surrounded as his was by his old brother-officers, was a painful one, to draft him to India. After he had been in India a short time, his friend, the major, exerted his influence, and obtained for him a commission in the East India Company's cavalry. For his bravery, he was promoted to the rank of captain; and then, unfortunate fellow, drank himself to death. He sent that miniature home to my father. That is, briefly, the history of Montgomery. I don't know about his love-affairs. He must have had some: his handsome face would be sure to bring him them."

After it was arranged that Gerald should continue his lessons three times a week, until he had arrived at perfection, and he had finished his grog and his pipe, he wished his old friend good-night, and started for home.

With the old man's help, Boyne made rapid progress, and in a few weeks' time was able to

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answer correctly all the intricate puzzles that it was Mr. Josephs's delight to set before him. The old clerk pronounced him a proficient; nay, he declared that Gerald almost rivalled the dead Trevor. When the lessons were concluded, the master made his pupil promise that he would come to see him often, and told him that he would always be welcome. Boyne was very grateful to him for this invitation, as, with the exception of the friend who had introduced him to Mr. Maynard, he had given up all his old acquaintance.



## CHAPTER V.

## INTRODUCTION TO MR. BOKES.

ONE Saturday evening, our hero was sitting alone, in his lodgings, reading. It was rather late—about twelve o'clock. The street-door was opened, and he heard some one enter the passage. The person staggered along towards the stairs, bumping frequently against the partition that divided Boyne's room from the hall. Gerald laid his book upon the table, and listened. Drunken mutterings, in a man's voice, about the wrongs of ill-used drapers' assistants, were distinctly audible; these were followed by a few more heavy, irregular steps, and then came a dull thud upon the floor and a very deep groan. Gerald immediately rushed out, candle in hand. A little, ugly, thin, white-faced man lay extended on the passage

floor in a helpless state of intoxication. His eyes were half closed ; his mouth was wide open. An unbecoming Yankee-looking beard hung from his chin. His clothes were covered with dust and dirt, and a portion of the crown of his hat, which he had crushed in falling, peeped out from underneath one of his sides. The man jabbered most unintelligibly. He was the very picture of drunken idiocy. Boyne placed the candle upon the hall table, and was about to lift the creature from the ground, when the landlady appeared, at the head of the kitchen stairs, weeping and scolding furiously.

“Oh, you wretch ! You disgusting wretch !” cried she. “You disreputable vagabond ! You, the father of a family, to come home to a hard-working wife in this state ! Ain’t you ashamed of yourself ?”

Mrs. Bokes (this was the landlady’s name) shook him roughly by the shoulder.

The animal opened his eyes, stared vacantly at his wife, and articulated in a manner that could scarcely be understood,—“Hic—na na—Dra—Drapers’—hic—’sis—hic—’sistants—worstused—hic—hic—in—in—indi—individles—hic—in hu—humanity ! Blow’d if they

ain't. Hic—hic, wa—waiter, 'nother—hic—three o' gin!"

"Three of gin!" exclaimed his wife, giving him a violent shaking. "That's how you take the bread out of your dear little children's mouths, is it, you beast? Oh, dear! oh, dear! I wish every publican was hanged! Robbing honest folks in this manner! If there wasn't places for men to drink, men wouldn't get drunk. He'd never get drunk at home, I'd warrant. He's a very kind, decent man when he's sober, Mr. Boyne. Here, wake up, you wretch, and don't keep the gentleman out in the passage all night! You can't think how much obliged to you, I am, sir." This was to Boyne. "Wake up, you brute!"

The woman began thumping the wretched drunkard's body with both her fists: he only breathed a little harder. He was what is termed dead drunk.

"It's no good to attempt to set him on his legs; for if he were put on them, he could never keep them," remarked Boyne.

"I'm afraid he couldn't."

"He must be carried."

"I'll help you," cried a cheery voice from above.

"Thank you, Mr. Carroll," replied the landlady.

Footsteps were heard upon the stairs, and the next moment a young man was looking at the senseless face of Mr. Bokes.

"Tight as a lord, this time!" said the medical student, for it was he. "Can't speak—no sensation! Cold douche—kitchen tap, or Liq. Ammon. Fort., would do him good." He turned to the landlady, "Haven't any Liq. Ammon. Fort.—I mean strong ammonia—I suppose?"

"No, sir," replied the landlady.

"Thought not. We must leave him until to-morrow, then. The cold douche, or kitchen-tap, would be too troublesome an operation for to-night. I'll take his head, if you'll take his lower extremities." He nodded in a friendly manner to Gerald, who at once took hold of the man's legs.

They lifted him off the floor between them.

"Mrs. Bokes," said the student, "you march in front with the light; then we'll commence

the triumphal progress of this devotee to the god Bacchus, or rather London gin, upstairs to his nuptial couch ; and, when there, we will undress him and leave him to the tender care of his beautiful, loving, and accomplished *cara sposa* !”

“What ! I sleep in the same room with such a wretch—much less in the same bed with him !” exclaimed the lady, indignantly. She was a tall woman, with a deeply lined, care-worn face and a scraggy neck. Bokes, in his sober and loving moments, was wont to say that he had to look up to his “piece of good fortune,” as he termed his better and loftier half.

“What shall we do with him, then ?” inquired Mr. Carroll.

“Best put him on the sofa, in the room next our kitchen, sir.”

“All right, Mrs. Bokes, that’s what we’ll do. We’ll place your valuable piece of household furniture where you suggest. You go first with the candle, please, for those stairs are steep. I should not like poor Bokes to be precipitated headlong down them. He might break his neck, you know ; and what a

shocking thing it would be, Mrs. Bokes!—what a sad trial!—what a talk for the neighbours, if your very worthy and, at the present time, very intoxicated lord and master trotted into eternity in this most deplorable condition! There'd be an inquest, a coroner, twelve intelligent British gentlemen of the jury, and all that sort of thing; and that isn't pleasant. For the enlightened gentlemen of the jury might possibly—and there's no knowing what they won't do—bring in a verdict of wilful murder against Robert Carroll, and allege that I brought about the death of the great Bokes, the eminent Bokes, the gin-bottle Bokes, because I aspired to the fair hand of his widow."

"Law, Mr. Carroll, you are a wicked one! you do go on at a rate!" said the lady, smirking.

"Take care of the candle as you pass, my dear madam, or some of the hot grease may possibly tickle the pale and intellectual forehead of the great Bokes!" exclaimed the student.

"Did you ever hear the like, Mr. Boyne?" said the lady, laughing, as she passed through

the narrow doorway that led to the kitchen-stairs.

"Hold the light up, my good lady," continued the student. "Gently round the corner. That's right! Straight sailing now. Four, five, six, seven—dear me, these stairs are very long! Bokes, you're a bit of a nuisance. Thank—h'm! 'Swear not at all,' saith the preacher; we've reached the bottom at last!"

They carried the drunken man into the little front room, and laid him on the sofa.

"We must cover him up with something," said the student. "Oh, here's a counterpane that Mrs. Bokes has been mending;" he snatched it from the back of a chair. "You haven't left the needle in it? No. All right then. There, he's covered up nicely now! You have the matches, Mrs. Bokes?" The landlady took them from the chimney-piece. "Always take care of matches when Bokes is in this state! He might set the place on fire—if he could manage to move about and strike a light. Now, the utmost damage he can do is to knock the crockery and his own legs about. I shouldn't be sorry if he did knock his own

legs about." He apostrophized the helpless tippler, thus: "Bokes, Bokes, this is shocking! How many pick-me-ups haven't I given you! How many doses of sal volatile have I not administered unto you, to steady your shaking frame! How many times have you not promised me that you would never get drunk again! Sad, very sad!"

"It is for me!" exclaimed Mrs. Bokes.

"I know it is.' I should like to see Bokes cured of his evil habit. I purpose to pursue a new course of treatment with Bokes. Every time Bokes comes in like this, we will give Bokes an emetic, and turn him into the yard. Do you agree to that?" said the student, turning towards Mrs. Bokes.

"Yes, sir, gladly, if you think it will cure him."

"Let me see; to-morrow is Sunday. He doesn't go to business. The very day for our purpose! Bokes shall take a very strong dose of ipecac. in his tea to-morrow morning. I'll bring you the powder down in time. Bokes will feel very queer afterwards. You must impress on him that it is all owing to the drink. He will be very repentant, I know,



and will keep straight for a little time. When he breaks out again, we will serve him exactly the same. A short course of that treatment will, I hope, produce an effectual cure. Good night, Mrs. Bokes. I think you will enjoy your night's rest better *absque marito* than *cum marito*."

After delivering himself of his Latin joke, the student tripped up the kitchen-stairs, with Gerald following him.

When they were outside Boyne's room, Mr. Carroll wished him good evening, and remarked that, "when a woman was in a bother, it was always best to be as funny as you could, and to try and laugh her out of it." He then walked up to his own room. Gerald entered his apartments, and soon afterwards retired to bed.

## CHAPTER VI.

MESSRS. CARROLL AND MOMPAS.

THE next morning, as our friend was sitting in his easy chair, reading the paper, he heard a knock at the door.

“Come in,” said he.

The door opened, and Mr. Carroll entered. He was a tall, thin young man, with a quantity of curly brown hair and huge whiskers. His dress consisted of a rusty black velveteen jacket, the braid of which was frayed in several places, a blue waistcoat, and a pair of shepherd’s-plaid trousers. A large scarf was tied round his neck, and thrust into the bosom of his vest. He had not yet put his collar on, and his feet were still slippered.

“Good morning,” said this gentleman, advancing towards Gerald, with one hand

stretched out towards him, and the other buried up to his wrist in his trousers' pocket. "I hope you'll excuse my making the first advances. I know it's very rude; that an Englishman's house is his castle, and that nobody has a right to intrude into it uninvited. That's the curse of English people; they're so deuced reserved. I hope you don't consider me impertinent?"

There was a frank, good-humoured smile on the young man's face. It would have been impossible for any one, except a crusty, love-blighted old bachelor, to have considered him rude.

"Certainly not," replied Gerald, shaking his hand.

"That's right. I have no doubt we shall get on splendidly, when we are better acquainted. I'm awfully chummy with the fellow above me—clerk in the Customs—and I thought I may as well strike up a friendship with you. You don't seem to go out much, or have much company, so a little of our society may not be objectionable to you."

Gerald replied that he was very much pleased to make his acquaintance.

“You’ll like Mompas—the man above me,” continued the student; “he’s a very good fellow, rather big—potty, perhaps—but still he’s a good fellow. I’ve been friendly with him all the time he’s been here. He came to this place about the commencement of my second year. You know I’m a medical student. — Hospital is my hospital. This is my third year at it. I’ve nearly completed my professional studies; and I’m jolly glad of it. A hospital is a very fine institution, no doubt, and the students are very agreeable fellows, and there are plenty of good larks to be had with the nurses; but it’s a place one can get tired of.” A noise like groaning was heard; it appeared to come from the back. “You hear that?” said Mr. Carroll. “That’s Bokes! His wife has given him the ipecac., and turned him into the yard. It’s just now commencing to tickle him up. Bokes will be in agony soon. Won’t he look a deplorable object an hour hence! I’ll go down and sympathize with him by-and-by. I’ll draw a long face, and inquire into his symptoms with the greatest gravity. I’ll make him believe that he’s been poisoned. Come up to my diggings

and have a smoke. Mompas is out, or else we'd have him. He's gone to church: always goes to church on Sunday morning to look at the girls. He takes an hour and a quarter dressing, and occupies more than half the time in admiring himself in the glass; then he comes down to show himself to me, and to ask, quite accidentally of course, if he looks all right. I say 'Yes,' and secretly throw some ink on his cuffs or collar, smear some tobacco-ash on his coat, or brush a part of his hat the wrong way, before he goes out. When he discovers my tricks, he fidgets himself almost into a fit; and nobody takes the trouble to notice the blemish in his personal appearance, except himself. It's such a lark! He puzzles his brain to find out how ever he could have got himself in such a pickle; he never suspects me. His foppishness is awful fun!" His eye rested on some music lying on the top of the old piano. "You play? I've a piano upstairs: not a very good one; still, it's better than this. Bring something up with you, and give me a tune."

Gerald took a few pieces in his hand, and followed his new friend up to his rooms.

The student's apartment resembled Boyne's,

only it was larger. It was furnished in much the same style. It was in a great litter: the chairs were covered with books, some of which were open, and some shut; papers lay scattered about the table and floor, and on the sofa were heaped several coats. Against one of the marble pilasters, supporting the mantel-piece, rested a large post-horn; and a large brosely churchwarden leaned against its fellow on the opposite side. Above the looking-glass, and with their bowls standing on its upper corners, were two more broselies, the stems of which crossed each other over a nail. Three briars—one of which had lost its mouth-piece—a well-coloured meerschaum, and several pipe-cases occupied a great portion of the mantel-shelf. A number of pieces of music, some old and tattered and others new, were piled in a confused mass upon the top of the piano. On the table was a large red-earthenware tobacco-pot, its lid lay by its side; and not far from it reposed a large German pipe; the bowl was of China, and on its front was painted the portrait of a most brilliantly complexioned young lady. A skull grinned in a ghastly manner from the top of the cheffonier; it was surrounded by

human bones of all sorts and sizes : a vertebral column depended from a hook on the wall. The proprietor of this untidy abode removed two great books from the easy chair, and flung them with a bang upon the table.

"So much for Ericson and Aitken!" exclaimed he. "Now, my friend, sit down : you take the seat of honour."

"No ; I won't take your seat," answered Gerald.

"My seat!" said the student. "I have no favourite seat. One chair is as good as another to me, as long as it has a firm bottom. Sit down, and make yourself as comfortable as you can in this very disorderly den."

Thus pressed, Gerald seated himself in the arm-chair. After Mr. Carroll had fished out from underneath the coats, that were strewn on the sofa, a green cloth smoking-cap, elaborately braided and tasselled, and placed it jauntily on the top of his brown curls, he drew up a chair opposite to his new acquaintance, and sat down on it.

"Now we'll light up," said he, taking a silver-mounted briar pipe from his pocket. He handed his tobacco-pot to Gerald.

"Try some of my tobacco? It's very good!"

"Thank you."

"You want a light. Take one of those vestas; they're better than vesuvians,—they don't smell so unpleasantly."

Presently the student said,—“What will you take to drink?”

"I don't care about anything, thank you," replied Gerald.

"Nonsense, you must have something! What shall it be—beer, wine, or spirits?"

"If I must take something, I think I should prefer beer."

"All right, it shall be beer. We'll have some Bass."

Mr. Carroll fetched a couple of pint bottles of ale from the chiffonier.

"By Jove!" said he, "there are no glasses! Never mind: my magnum—my loving-cup—will do; that is, if you don't object to drinking with me?"

"Certainly not," replied Boyne.

"There!" exclaimed Carroll, placing a large two-handled mug upon the table, "that's my favourite vessel when I go in for a big



drink—a regular jorum. It holds about three pints. A bottle's nowhere in it, so we'll put in two."

He uncorked the bottles, and emptied them into the mug; then he handed it to Gerald, who took a draught, and returned it to him.

"My respects to you," said the student, with a low bow. "I look towards you, sir. May our friendship increase, and may our happiness never be the less for it: and, if I had passed my last college, I would add, may all our miseries have ended; but I have not. Alas! that misery is to come: that distressful, funky, and awful period of my existence, when my fate shall waver in the balance, looms in the not far-distant future, and casts a shadow over the sunshine of my soul. O examiners, be merciful on that day! May none of you be troubled with the stomach-ache; may your wives be restrained from administering curtain lectures; and may one and all of you have received intelligence of a thumping legacy the night before; so that your hearts may be full of joy, and incline you to receive a poor, blushing, trembling candidate into the bosom of your worthy old surgical fraternity, and not

refer him to six months' more hard sweating and grinding, because, of all things under the sun, he abhors them most. Here's luck to us both." He lifted the mug to his lips, and took a deep draught.

"You must come and have a look at our hospital one day," said he, as he replaced the cup upon the table.

"I shall be very pleased to, when I have leisure. I am generally at the office in the city until five or six o'clock."

"You must come when you have a holiday. You take one sometimes, I suppose, like other people? I do—I can't help it. I can work on steadily enough for a fortnight or so; then, I break out. A two-days' lark sets me all right again. The human mind can't stew for ever: it wants relaxation; if it does not get that, it loses its balance. I want my mind to continue in its present state—calm, cool, and comfortable, untroubling and untroubled. The time may come when anxiety may turn my hair grey; but I am determined that it shall not come yet awhile. You've no idea what an immense strain on the brain the study of medicine is. The burning of the midnight oil—the student's

lamp—is a sad exhauster of nerve-force; therefore, I don't burn any more of it than I can possibly help." Mr. Carroll laughed lightly. "But, if you'll come and see me at the Hospital, I'll introduce you to a lot of jolly fellows, and show you some curiosities too. Then, there are two or three pretty Sisters who don't object to a demure flirtation; and the nurses, they are rough-and-ready, good-natured girls, fond of chaff and frolic when the Sisters are out of the way. That's your music?" He took up some of Gerald's pieces in his hand.

"Yes."

"Weber, Mozart, Beethoven. They're all a touch above me. This is more in my line."

Without removing his pipe from his mouth, he sat down at the piano and rattled off several opéra-bouffe airs and senseless arrangements of popular melodies.

"It's something to have a respectable piano in a room!" exclaimed Gerald. "It's rather different from the old thing downstairs."

"That's only fit for firewood! My uncle allows me to hire this."

"You have lost your parents, like myself?"

"Oh, no! My father and mother are both

alive. My old governor is a country practitioner, with a large family and a small income. There are seven of us. I'm the fourth on the list—the middle one; I've a sister and two brothers above me. My sister is married to a medical man, and my two elder brothers are medical men; so you see we are a regular medical family. The only member of it that isn't a doctor is my revered uncle, and he's the only one of us that has made a fortune; he's a manufacturer. When I was about four years old, my uncle saw that my *pater* was greatly harassed by his increasing family, and his practice that would not increase—why the deuce men with small incomes generally have large families, I can't make out, but it's a fact, they do! So, as he and his wife had no children of their own, they offered to take one off my father's hands. He joyfully accepted the proposal; he was only too delighted to get rid of one, for he knew that the youngster would be better provided for at its uncle's than at home. I was the brat selected. My uncle and aunt have brought me up as their son, and (it may be rather wicked to confess it) I have a much greater affection for

them than I have for my own parents. After leaving school, I was allowed to choose a profession. I sillily fixed on the medical. I am sorry that I did, for I find that I have no particular genius for it. I shall never be more than a mediocre doctor, and I don't think I should have been more than a mediocre anything. I'm a commonplace, good-tempered mortal, that isn't wholly ignorant of great men and great works; in fact, my chief genius is my good temper. I'm rather egotistical, but you won't mind that, when you know me better."

Gerald nodded and whiffed away at his pipe; he was amused at his new friend's egotism.

"It's a great pity that fellows can't see something of the working of a profession before they enter it. If I had known beforehand of all the drudgery appertaining to doctoring, I would never have taken it up. There's not very much ability required; still there is a good deal of hard work—more hard work than I like, for I know that I shall never turn out more than a second-rate doctor; and I don't exactly care about being that, for

second-rate doctors are as plentiful as blackberries. I dare say it's very noble to go about curing the measles, and sore-throats, and the quinsy, and that sort of thing, but I'd prefer another man to do it. My uncle sent me up here in the hope that I should become a medical great gun, a shining light of physic or surgery, a hospital physician or surgeon, or a professor; and I find out by experience that I have neither the vocation (as the nuns say) nor the perseverance to gratify his expectations. I can go over common ground well enough, but I have no inventive genius in that way. What I lack makes the great surgeon or physician. I am shrewd, but I haven't that intuitive grasp over the phenomena of disease and its remedies that at once tells a man that he is fitted for his calling. I dare say I may make a tolerable doctor; or, if chance favours me sufficiently, a good enough fashionable physician; for gentlemanly manners, a ready tongue, able to humour everybody and to talk sensibly on every subject (whether you are acquainted with it or not), and a few influential friends are all the requirements for success in that line. I

think I should be able to do the humbug all right—that would be fine fun ! I should be laughing in my sleeve all the time. There's a friend of mine up at the hospital—Newton ; I'll warrant he'll turn out a good fashionable physician. He's a slim, dandified fellow, with a glib tongue that would charm anybody. The women are all in love with him, and he serves them awfully badly too ! He hasn't the least respect for their feelings ; he chucks them off directly he's tired of them—never makes them disgusted with him, and then slips from them, as a more sensitive individual would do. Come, play me one of your pieces."

Gerald sat down at the piano, and played Weber's 'Polacca.'

"By Jove, that's splendid !" exclaimed the student, when the piece was finished. "I wish I could play like that ! You have the air of a thorough *virtuoso* : you put your whole spirit into the music."

"I can't help doing so, when the music is worth the trouble."

"I wish I could play like you do."

"You soon would, if you practised well."

"I should like to learn that piece."

"Why don't you?"

Mr. Carroll shook his head thoughtfully, smiled, and said that he thought it would prove too much for him.

"There is not much more difficulty in playing really good music than in playing some of those silly things which you did just now," replied Gerald.

"My teacher always told me that classical music was so dry."

"What did he give you, then?"

"Those fantasias and pieces of that kind."

"I suppose you know the reason?" said Gerald, smiling.

"No," replied Carroll.

"The music-sellers allow professors a larger per-centage for getting rid of their rubbish than they do on the works of the great masters."

"So the professors neglect their duty to their pupils just for the sake of a little paltry gain."

"There is as great a proportion of rogues and empirics in the musical world as there is in any other profession. Half the teachers



don't know the rudiments of the art which they profess to teach. Music-teaching, with many, is the last resource of incompetence."

"I am afraid all the money that the old rascal, who taught me, took from my uncle was paid for nothing."

"No. You know your notes; you can apparently read pretty well, and you have some idea of time; so that, although he has undoubtedly swindled you, you have gained some knowledge from him."

"I'm awfully taken with that polacca," said Carroll, looking over it.

"I'll coach you up in it, if you like," replied Gerald.

"I shudder. I'm almost afraid to attempt it."

"Sit down and try," said Gerald, rising from the music-stool.

"You must excuse my blunders," remarked the student, as he sat down.

"Certainly," replied Gerald, laughing.

The student read over the piece once or twice, and then commenced to play it. He succeeded fairly; that is to say, he only broke down a few times.

"You got on with it much better than I expected. That must be altered though, and so must that, and these bars here," said Gerald, turning over the leaves and pointing out various passages that the student had not rendered rightly. "You pay attention, whilst I go over it once more, and see if you can catch the style better."

The student surrendered his seat to Boyne, who went over the piece again, paying particular attention to the mistakes.

"Now you try it again," said Gerald, when he had finished.

Mr. Carroll seated himself before the instrument, and did as he was requested.

"Bravo!" exclaimed Boyne. "You have succeeded much better this time. That part, though, is not quite up to the mark. You must practise it continually until you get perfect in it."

"It's very kind of you to give me the benefit of your instruction. I hope you'll always make use of the piano whenever you like."

"Thank you," said Gerald. "I shall avail myself of your permission pretty frequently."

Footsteps were heard ascending the stairs.

"That's Mompas come home from church," exclaimed Carroll.

In another instant, an important-looking young gentleman, of about twenty-five years of age, entered the room. He was of medium height, and was neither too lean nor too fat. There was a certain air of lackadaisical foppishness, blended with the self-satisfied superiority that is always more or less visible in Government officials (from chiefs to messengers), about this individual, which was rather ludicrous.

"Mr. Boyne, our neighbour, Mompas," remarked Carroll, by way of introduction.

Mr. Mompas made Gerald a most elaborate bow.

"Most happy to make Mr. Boyne's acquaintance," said the Customs clerk, in a tone that made our friend say to himself that he was decidedly "big-potty." "Fine weather. Rather too warm, if anything. Church was very full this morning. Very hot there; three ladies fainted, and had to be carried out. I don't like women who faint in church: they ought to move directly they feel the faintness

coming on. They do it to create a sensation, frequently, I believe. I had the misfortune to take a young lady to church two Sundays following: she fainted both times! I was asked to take her a third time, but I politely excused myself. Twice was a sickener for me; I did not want a third faint."

Mr. Mompas deposited his hat and cane on the table, then slowly pulled off a pair of lavender gloves, that looked as if they had been cleaned several times, arranged his wristbands (which were fastened by a pair of massive solitaires), unburdened his coat-pocket of a Prayer-book, looked into the glass opposite to him, ran his fingers through his hair and whiskers, and finally adjusted more to his taste the green leaves at the base of a flower, which was inserted into the top button-hole of his frock. After he had concluded these operations, his eye suddenly caught sight of the beer-mug.

"Doing a beer?" said he, as he seized hold of Mr. Carroll's "magnum" and applied it to his lips.

"Yes," answered the owner of the "magnum"; "and if you are going to swig away

at that rate, you had better pour in another bottle."

"With pleasure, my dear fellow," replied Mr. Mompas, as he took the advice of his friend; then, after helping himself to another draught, he put his hands into his trousers pockets, and strolled towards the window.

"Awfully dull day, Sunday," remarked he, yawning, and looking into the street. "Nothing to do, except to go to church; and that's not very interesting. Sunday is a purgatory."

"I always manage to get on tolerably well on Sunday," said Carroll, laughing. "I make it a holiday, as far as I can. I don't see why I should make myself miserable because the generality of the British public are fools that allow a set of old canting, ranting idiots to lead them by the nose. I eat, I drink, I read novels, make merry with my friends; in fact, I do just the same as I would on any other day. I am not in favour of theatres being opened, for I think the actors ought to have one day free in the week."

"Have you read the morning paper?" inquired Mr. Mompas.

"Yes," answered Carroll.

"What is in it?" asked the Government clerk.

"Same as usual. Theatrical puffs and horrible murders."

"Anything fresh in politics?"

"Don't know. I never look at politics. I take no interest in politics. I'll wait till I'm a paterfamilias for that—till I'm a man of property. Then, I shall try and convince the Government that if they don't protect my interests, to the exclusion of the interests of the commonwealth, the constitution of the country is going to pot, because it won't permit me to chisel my neighbours; and that that most remarkable anomaly, the 'Constitutional Monarchy'—that serviceable red-flannel republican cap, surrounded by a tin-pot, tinselled, theatrical crown—will fall to pieces."

"What a gabber you are!" exclaimed Mr. Mompas.

"My power of gab, sir, is inherited from my female progenitor."

"Then I pity your father," replied the Customs clerk.

"When my beloved mother's tongue," said Carroll, "goes on at too rattling a pace, he always finds out that he has a pressing engagement with a patient."

"Like the old gentleman that always turned up his deaf ear to his wife's curtain lecture."

"Yes," replied Carroll; "but don't you entertain felonious intentions regarding that beer!" Mr. Mompas was looking very suspiciously at the mug. "Remember that there are two others in the room that like beer as well as yourself. What do you say to a game at dummy-whist to while away the time?"

"I don't object," said Gerald.

"Nor I," answered the owner of the Prayer-book.

"Well," said Carroll, "just hand down those cards."

Mompas placed the cards on the table.

"Now we'll cut," said Carroll. "I play with dummy, you with Mompas. I think my partner the better of the two. Dummy's deal!" Mr. Carroll proceeded to deal the cards.

"How do you like your quarters?" asked Mompas of Boyne.

“Oh, very well.”

“Very comfortable—no fuss—tolerable cooking,” said the Government clerk.

“I’d advise you to avoid Mrs. Bokes’s tongue, though,” exclaimed Carroll. “It shoots as high as a skyrocket, and lasts longer. It takes a regular circle when once she commences. You can never be sure what she is going to enlighten you on. She begins about washing; something puts children’s flannels into her head; she goes from children’s flannels to her own progeny, from her own progeny to her next-door neighbour’s, and then she enters into a comparison between these and her friend’s over the way; then she remembers about the very pretty little drawers that the little brats wear, and from these she proceeds to the manufacture and getting-up of drawers, &c., and so on to flat irons and the price of coals; then to miners and their strikes; and perhaps she will finish up by asking a question about her first remark, which, by this time, has totally escaped from your memory. You very often answer ‘Yes’ when you ought to say ‘No,’ and that offends the good woman. She goes off in a huff, and



imagines that you are too proud to speak to her, and serves you out by keeping you waiting for your breakfast the next morning. I'm up to her now. I always say that I am not sufficiently experienced to give an opinion. Dummy turns up the king of diamonds!"

The three amused themselves by playing and smoking, and now and then refreshing their palates with a sip of Bass, until half-past one, when Mompas jumped up from his seat in a hurry, and said that he must be off.

"You're going out to dinner, then?" said Carroll.

"Well, I don't know. I think it's always wise to be on the safe side."

"You're like me," replied Carroll, taking a minute edition of the Common Prayer-book from his waistcoat pocket. "I always carry a book of the offices about with me, so that if I see any pretty girl enter a church (and if I do, a devotional feeling suddenly overpowers me, and I am obliged to follow her), I always have my Prayer-book ready to give out my Amens and responses in a respectable manner. Pretty women are the only magnets that ever draw me to church."

"Good morning to you both," said Mompas, as he hurried from the room.

"I can't exactly make that fellow out," exclaimed Carroll, as he heard the front door shut. "He dines out about once in every three weeks; the other Sundays he keeps me company at home. It's mysterious. If I had not heard so many of his tirades against the fair sex, I should think that he was in love."

"His conversation would not lead you to think that he had a very high opinion of women, then?" said Boyne.

"No. The only woman I ever heard him speak well of was his mother. All the rest are mercenary wretches—abominations that deserve to be deceived."

"There are some women that deserve to be deceived."

"And some men ditto," exclaimed Carroll, laughing.

"I agree with you."

"Mompas is awful against the women. I expect he must have got mixed up with a very bad lot of them in his youthful days."

"Most fellows do," answered Gerald.

"Yes; but there is not generally such a sting left behind."

Gerald smiled to himself, at his own youthful folly.

"Well," said the student, "all these things can't be helped. We must get through this life as comfortably as we can. It's no good to grumble at the hard knocks which you receive in this world: it's better to grin at them. I must say that I hope I shall never arrive at that most Christian state of feeling of loving an enemy, though. Where are you going to have dinner?"

"I've promised to dine with a friend."

"Then, I think I shall dine at home; that is, if they have not baked meat. I don't like the funeral-baked meats. Baking makes the meat hard. After dinner I'll have a good practice at Weber, and a turn at Ericson or Aitken; and then, in the evening, I think I'll take a stroll in Hyde Park."

"I think I must be going now," said Gerald, rising and putting his pipe in his pocket.

"If you are back early, you can look me up, you know."

“I will.”

“Well, good-bye for the present.”

We will leave Gerald to a quiet dinner and a chat at his friend's, whilst we follow the adventures of the merry student.

## CHAPTER VII.

HOW MR. CARROLL AMUSES HIMSELF ON A  
SUNDAY EVENING.

DIRECTLY after Boyne had left him, Mr. Carroll went down into the kitchen to have an interview with Mrs. Bokes.

“ Well, Mrs. Bokes,” said he, “ what have you for dinner ? ”

“ Roast mutton, sir,” replied the lady, who was bending over the fire.

“ Any pudding ? ”

“ Yes, Mr. Carroll ; custard.”

“ Then, please be kind enough to send some meat and pudding up to my room, when dinner is ready.”

“ It will be ready in about five minutes. You like greens ? ”

“ Rather so. Where ’s Bokes ? ”

"In the next room, lying on the sofa. He's been groaning fearful ; but he's a little better now. He thought he was going to die !"

"That may do him good. I'll just look in upon him !"

"That's right, sir, do ! He wants cheering up a bit. I don't like to see the poor man look so miserable."

Mrs. Bokes had changed from last night, Carroll thought.

He proceeded into the front room, and found the two children playing, and Mr. Bokes, very pale and with a terrified expression on his countenance, reclining on the couch.

"Well, Bobby ; how's Bobby to-day ?" inquired Mr. Carroll, of a sturdy little fellow, who was sitting on the floor and playing at coaching with the leg of the table. "Mr. Bokes, I hear that you are not very well." The student's face assumed an expression of intense sympathy.

"Very bad here, sir," replied Mr. Bokes, dolefully, as he placed his hand upon his stomach.

"Indeed !" said the student, very gravely.

"Is it dangerous, sir ?" asked Bokes, in a timid voice.

"That depends on the cause of it. There's a good deal of disease about now, very dangerous; but, of course, I should not like to say. But what have you been taking lately? That may help me to find out whether there is any cause for alarm or not."

"Well, I had a cup of tea this morning," replied Mr. Bokes, with a most innocent expression upon his countenance.

"Anything last night?"

"Well, a glass or two of gin and water, perhaps," said Mr. Bokes, after a few moments' hesitation.

Mr. Carroll looked graver than before. Bokes noticed the change.

"There's no harm in that, is there, sir?" asked the poor man, entreatingly.

"Have you vomited?"

"Eh?" ejaculated the linendraper's assistant.

"Been sick?"

"Oceans!" exclaimed Mr. Bokes.

"That's well," said Carroll, with a sigh of relief.

"Was I very bad, then?" inquired the frightened Mr. Bokes.

"Good many cases of poisoning through

gin," replied the student. "It's not generally known, of course, but the legislature intends taking up the subject. The distillers don't care how they make their gin, as long as they sell it. But a paternal government won't allow her Majesty's subjects to be killed off wholesale. They'd hang a dozen distillers round the clock-tower at Westminster first. Undoubtedly your illness has been caused by the gin. It's a mercy that you are as well as you are. Let me look at your tongue!"

The terrified patient showed his tremulous tongue.

"Hm! bad tongue, very bad tongue!" continued Carroll. "I would not have such a tongue as that for any money. Let me feel your pulse!" He laid his fingers on the hand which Bokes held out to him, "Pulse irregular—very irregular!" Here Mrs. Bokes entered with some dinner-things. "You must on no account permit your husband to take even a mouthful of meat to-day, Mrs. Bokes. He had better not drink anything except a little cold tea!"

The patient looked mournfully at his medical adviser.

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"Now I don't think I can be of any more use," said Carroll. "I hope he'll be able to go to business to-morrow. It's a near chance he's had!" (Mrs. Bokes turned her head away to indulge in a laugh.) "If any worse symptoms arise, send for me at once!" With this last admonition, the student departed.

He ate his dinner, drank another bottle of ale, topped it by one or two glasses of port, and then passed the afternoon in practising the "Polacca," in skimming over a few chapters of a sensational novel, in glancing at some of his medical books, and in smoking half-a-dozen or more pipes. About five o'clock he thought he would take a walk. His head ached—students' heads always do ache when they have an inclination to go for a walk. As it promised to be a fine evening, he finished dressing himself, peered into his glass for nearly as long a time as that for which he had laughed at his friend Mompas, and then sallied forth on his ramble. He had not gone far before he thought he should like a cigar. He stopped at the next respectable-looking cigar-shop, and examined, with a critical eye, the brands in the window. The brands, as usual,

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were all good; but, as the cigars might not agree with the brands, he determined to buy one only. It turned out to be an abominable cigar—so bad, in fact, that our student-friend was obliged to give it to the first crossing-sweeper he met. “I’ve a great mind,” muttered he, “never to buy any cigars except Pickwicks. You can’t possibly get worse than Pickwicks, and fourpennies never seem to be any better. Hope keeps me up, though. I hope some time or other to tumble across a good cigar and an honest tobacconist.”

A short time after, he tried another shop. He succeeded in obtaining a cigar which he could smoke with pleasure this time, and was so delighted that he had his cigar-case filled. “Only five bob left,” he remarked to himself, as he was leaving the shop. “I couldn’t have much of a spree to-night, if I were larkishly inclined.”

He continued his walk to the Park. Just outside the gates he met a well-dressed young gentleman, with a handsome but rather effeminate countenance.

“Newton!” said he, shaking hands with him. “Who the deuce would have thought of meeting you?”

"Just come out for a stroll," replied Mr. Newton. "The 'gov.' is always rather heavy and paternal after dinner; talks about what a great expense I am to him, &c., &c.; so I cut his society as soon as possible. Where are you off to?"

"I am just taking a quiet walk; having a look round, you know."

The two students began laughing. It is surprising how soon students will laugh, and what trifling things will make them laugh as heartily as the best jokes ever uttered.

"I'll come with you, if you like," said Newton.

"I shall be pleased with your company," replied Carroll.

"Shall we go down this walk?"

"Yes; it will be cooler beneath these trees."

It was a fine summer's evening, with just sufficient breeze blowing to keep the air moderately cool. The walk was crowded with people. There might have been seen awkward-looking men, dressed in their Sunday's best, sauntering along (with children on each side of them), and turning round every few minutes to address loud observations to their wives in the rear,

about the passers-by, or their little ones' clothes, or inquiring in a rough, good-humoured manner whether the 'old gal is tired'; old men with young wives, who cast stolen glances at every young spark that came near them; servant-girls and soldiers; sweethearts talking earnestly about their matrimonial prospects; steady married couples, that had come out to take a sniff of fresh air; shop-boys proudly puffing their cigars, and bowing most politely to the young ladies that belonged to their establishments; some ragged, miserable men and women, who looked as if they did not know where to go for their next meal (such people will always intrude their haggard, care-worn faces into every place of public resort which demands no entrance-fee); young gentlemen of the higher classes, who gazed superciliously through half-closed eyes at the "vulgar mob" which environed them, and shuddered at the slightest contact with the obnoxious 'οι πολλοι; and, last but not least, numbers of boys and girls (of the lower orders, of course), of thirteen or fourteen, amusing themselves by a boisterous kind of love-making.

After Carroll and his friend had strolled once or twice up and down the walk (looking at all the fair damsels they met, you may be sure), they noticed that they had attracted the most particular attention of two youthful and very pretty members of the opposite sex. The young ladies bestowed on them looks of the deepest admiration—looks which told the youths that they were ready to fall over head and ears in love with them, if they would only give them the opportunity. Amorous glances from two such sweet ones could not fail to excite pleasurable emotions in the breasts of such careless, easy-going fellows as our students. All the young men cared for was present enjoyment; thoughts of the future had no place in their brains—not at that time, at least. Simultaneously, they mentally determined that as their company would greatly add to the happiness of the pretty dears (at any rate, for that single evening), they should have it. What sublime generosity on their part! The young men halted, and looked after these two fair daughters of Eve. In a second or two, they had the satisfaction and delight of seeing two girlish faces turned towards them, and two

pairs of bright, smiling, bashfully coaxing eyes, liberally showering very flattering, coy love-glances upon them. Is it in youthful human nature — especially of the class “medical students”—to resist such delicious advances?

Carroll smiled, and raised his hat; one of the young ladies bowed; in another instant, Carroll and his friend were close to them.

“Two such pretty young ladies should not be walking alone. It’s highly dangerous,” said Mr. Carroll, addressing himself to the girls, and making a most elaborate bow. “Permit my friend and myself to offer you our protection.”

The girls blushed, looked at each other, and giggled. One was a pretty, fair-haired young creature of seventeen; the other was a handsome brunette of about the same age.

“It really is not safe,” continued Mr. Carroll, “for you to be walking alone. You may be insulted.”

“Some young ladies would consider themselves insulted now,” replied the brunette, with an arch look in her laughing black eyes.

"Not when they look like you do, though," retorted the impudent young scamp.

"Did you ever hear such a cheeky fellow, Milly?" said the black-eyed young lady to her companion.

"No," replied Milly, who seemed more bashful than her friend.

"I have no doubt Miss Milly is right," said Carroll, catching up the girl's name at once. "All my friends say that I am the cheekiest fellow they know. By-the-bye, what a strange coincidence! Miss Milly is fair; my friend is fair. They ought to be better acquainted with each other. I'll introduce them. Miss Milly (I don't know your surname, so we'll say Dash)."

"No," interposed the brunette; "the Dashes are so common: better say Jones."

"I acquiesce," said Carroll. "Miss Milly Jones, let me have the honour of introducing you to my distinguished friend, Mr. Robinson Brown."

The two persons bowed, and the girls again indulged in a little giggling.

"Now, Miss Milly Jones and Mr. Robinson Brown," continued the loquacious student, "as

you are a very fine young couple, and to all appearances excellently suited to one another—both being extremely modest in demeanour, and, no doubt, most ingenuous in disposition—I think you had better pair off, and allow me to do the same with the owner of the most splendid black eyes I have ever seen—their flashes have cut my heart in strips—whose name is—?”

Mr. Carroll placed his hand on his heart, and made a very low bow to the person who had so deeply injured him.

“Miss Jenny Smith,” replied the brunette with the laughing black eyes, “a member of the old and aristocratic family of the Smiths of London.”

On hearing that the lady belonged to this ancient and most distinguished family, Mr. Carroll bowed again.

“It is only right,” said he, with mock earnestness, “that a lady of such high birth should know with whom she is conversing. Therefore, to set her mind at rest, I inform her that the humble individual before her is Evan Evans, of Slypprythwyth, New South Wales, a descendant of Evan Evans, King of



the Bush-Rangers, that ranged the bushes there in the year B.C. 1875, before the discovery of Australia by the English, and who was married to the mother of that Hugh Evans who was converted by Shakespeare into a parson and a knight, and figures in his celebrated comedy of the 'Merry Wives of Windsor.' No short pedigree, even for a Welshman! Will you take my arm?"

"What lady could refuse the arm of the descendant of so celebrated a convict?" exclaimed the damsel, as she accepted it.

"Now the formalities of introduction are over," said that talkative person, Mr. Carroll, "we can give ourselves up to unrestrained social intercourse, and enjoy a quiet stroll in the balmy evening air through the lovely groves—un-nightingaled and still as death, but for the uninterrupted chattering of the male and female voices of the swains and nymphs that infest them—shaded by the magnificent branches of the magnificent trees that flourish magnificently in this magnificent park, the munificent gift of that red-hot old royalist humbug, Chancellor Hyde. By Jove, I think I should do for a stump-erator, a showman, or

a cheap-jack, with a little practice! What shall we talk about?"

"As you will do all the talking, I think I had better let you select your own subjects," replied the lady.

"Then let us talk of love—and the moon!"

"Leave the moon out to-night. Its light is very strong; you may get moon-struck!"

"Then we'll talk of love, that sweet passion that makes one—moonish!"

"And spoonish!" suggested Miss Jenny.

"Yes," replied Carroll, "when it exists between a thief and a housemaid, and causes the latter to steal the spoons."

"Oh, you bad punster!" exclaimed his companion, with a horrified shudder.

"Punsters always are bad, are they not? or, at least, I never heard any one say that a pun was good. A pun is low wit, very low wit. I say so, although I am sometimes addicted to punning. What medical student is not?"

"Oh, you're a medical student, are you?" inquired the girl, quickly.

"Yes," replied her companion; "as much as smoking strange pipes, drinking an uncon-

scionable amount of strong beer, walking through the wards of a hospital, chatting with the patients, chaffing the nurses, annoying the Sisters, and keeping my professional books locked up in a glass case, for the admiration of my friends, can make me."

"To what hospital do you belong?" asked the lady.

The rogue thought that that question was "coming it rather too close," so he told the young lady that his hospital was St. X.—one about five miles in a totally opposite direction to — Hospital, the one at which our friend was supposed to be studying. He was a young gentleman who prided himself on the caution with which he conducted his amours; he always took care to give to the objects of his frequently passing fancy wrong names and wrong addresses. Undoubtedly this little trick saved him much trouble when he was desirous of discontinuing their acquaintance. He was sure that the forsaken damsels would not come and make a fuss at his lodgings.

"You medical students are wicked fellows!" said the girl, looking at him sily.

"My sweet friend, we are as God made us!" replied Mr. Carroll.

"Is that good-for-naught?" inquired the girl, with a smile.

"Well," answered the student, "good-for-naught, with a modification. Good-for-naught in our younger days, because, like parsons, doctors are supposed, by the generality of individuals, to do nothing but good in their maturer years; but, as in regard to the parsons, I am afraid there is not much truth in the universal belief."

"I had no idea you were so modest," said Miss Jenny.

"I modest!" exclaimed Mr. Carroll. "Why, most people say that I blow my own trumpet to a troublesome extent."

"You must be modest to give yourself a bad character."

"No, not modest—only truthful."

"I like that 'truthful'!" exclaimed the girl, laughing, "when you said that your name was Evan Evans, of some unpronounceable place in New South Wales."

"Little baggage is fishing for my name," thought Carroll. "Knew she would. They

always like to get a hold on one." Then, addressing her, he said, "What made you tell me that your name was Jenny Smith, of the Smiths of London?"

"For the same reason that you called your friend Mr. Robinson Brown."

"What was that?" asked Carroll.

"Because I don't choose to tell every stranger my real name!"

"Tit-for-tat! You're a knowing one!" said Carroll.

"One is obliged to be a little knowing, when walking arm-in-arm with a young gentleman who owns himself to be no better than he should be."

"Another rap!"

"You'll get plenty, if you are long in my company," replied the young lady.

"Not satisfied with slashing my heart into strips, you'll pummel my body to powder."

"Yes."

So these two young people continued promenading up and down the walk, and amusing themselves with bantering conversation of a similar kind to the preceding specimen. Mr. Newton did not make such rapid progress with

his fair companion. She was shy, and, for a time, her only share in the talk was affirmatives and negatives, thus:—

NEWTON.—I think a walk is awfully jolly on a fine night, like this.

MILLY.—Yes.

NEWTON.—Especially when you have a nice companion.

MILLY.—Yes.

NEWTON.—Your friend is very handsome.

MILLY.—Yes.

NEWTON.—I prefer fair girls, though.

(Milly was fair-haired. She blushed.)

NEWTON.—Not an orthodox taste for a fair man.

MILLY.—No.

She looked half timidly at his face, and thought that it was very handsome, and that his blue eyes were beautiful.

NEWTON.—I suppose you come out for a walk most evenings?

MILLY.—Yes.

NEWTON.—I hope I shall have the pleasure of meeting you again.

(Newton thought it a “confounded bore,” having to talk to a woman that only said “Yes” and “No.”)

MILLY.—I dare say you will.

(The timid little thing devoutly hoped that he would.)

“Hem!” thought Newton, “that’s better. Four words at once. The girl may not be as dull as she appears. If she were not such a pretty girl, I’d cut her.”

He persevered with her, and was at last rewarded for his pains; for, after a while, she began to prattle about books and theatres, herself, her business, and her friends, as familiarly as if she had known him for years. From her confidences, he discovered that both the girls were orphans, that they were dress-makers, that they lodged together, and that her friend Jenny was engaged to be married to a “gentleman” employed in a grocer’s shop, that it was too bad of Jenny to be flirting with his friend, and that if her (Jenny’s) “young gentleman” knew it he would be cross, but that it served him right, as he had promised to meet her that evening, and had not kept his appointment.

Newton observed that Carroll and his fair friend had stopped in the centre of the path, and were waiting for their approach.

"I say, Brown," said Carroll to Newton, as soon as they came near, "no doubt these young ladies would like to partake of a little refreshment."

Brown (Newton) thought it just probable that they would; and although the young ladies declared that they did not require any, yet it was evident, from the glances that passed between them, that if they did not want any refreshment, but a little pressing would be required to make them take some. The students coaxed them a little, and in a short time the girls consented to partake of some.

"Where shall we go?" inquired Newton of his friend.

"I don't know," answered Mr. Carroll, thoughtfully, as he pulled his left whisker out to its utmost extent. "Anywhere you like."

"All right," said the other, after a short pause. Let us go to the *Café* —, if the ladies are agreeable."

Milly had never been to the *Café* —. Jenny had heard of it, but a friend of hers (her lover, the grocer's assistant—so Milly



whispered in Newton's ear) had told her that it was not a nice place for ladies.

"Not a nice place for ladies!" exclaimed Carroll. That's all bosh!"

"Some twaddling old maid, that can't bear the sight of a man, must have told you that," remarked Newton.

"No, it was not a twaddling old maid. It was a gentleman," replied Jenny, rather warmly.

"Then he must have been a Snivellite!" exclaimed Mr. Carroll, with great contempt.

"What's that?" asked the girl.

"Don't you know what a Snivellite is?" said Mr. Carroll, in a tone of surprise.

"No."

"Why, you are a little duffer. Well, I'll define him to you. Listen attentively. A Snivellite is a demure-looking, slow-paced animal, with a long, sour, melancholy, bilious countenance and lank, badly cut hair; he is usually dressed in a respectable suit of black on a Sunday and upon holidays; he attends a Methody-meeting shop, or a shop of a similar nature, belongs to Young Men's Christian Associations, teaches at Sunday-schools, larks

on the sly with the female teachers, and plays the solemn hypocrite and prig on every possible occasion."

"Then, he isn't a Snivellite; for he's a good, honest fellow."

"He! Who's he?"

"Never you mind," was the young lady's reply; whereupon Carroll laughed, Newton laughed, Milly laughed, and at last Jenny herself joined in the laugh.

"Well," said Carroll, after the laughing had subsided, "never you mind what he said. Come and judge for yourself."

"You are sure it's not a naughty place?" protested the young lady.

"Have you been to the 'Grand Cham'?" asked Carroll.

Miss Jenny confessed that she had—once.

"Well, then," replied Carroll, "the *Café*—— won't do you any harm."

After some further protestations as to the innocence of that most immaculate place of public resort, Miss Jenny consented to be conducted thither by her cavalier. Without delay they proceeded to the *Café*, with the assistance of a ramshackle four-wheeled cab, a poor broken-

winded, broken-kneed horse that had lost all signs of gentility (if it had ever possessed any), and a bloated, apoplectic-looking driver, wrapped up in a thick greatcoat, although the thermometer was above summer-heat, whose red nose, fiery as a carbuncle, and purple cheeks furnished unmistakable proofs that he had spent the principal part of his time off the box in imbibing spirits without water.

"You pay Cabby, old fellow," whispered Carroll to Newton, when they had alighted from the cab. "I'm rather hard up."

"Watch at its maker's, eh?" asked the other, with a wink.

"No; I'll go to my uncle in the country before I visit my uncle in town," answered Carroll, laughing. "Only a temporary embarrassment—left my money at home. Safest place for it in the long run."

"Yes, when there isn't a canary bird in the house."

A series of winks and grins passed between these two young gentlemen, that astonished their fair companions, and aggravated the cab-

man, who was impatiently waiting for his fare.

After having satisfied Cabby, they passed up the staircase, and entered a large and brilliantly lighted saloon. Jenny walked on with the confident air of one accustomed to the blaze of gaslight, huge mirrors, and the glittering of gilding, or of one who was determined not to be surprised at anything that came within her field of vision; but Milly stared about her in a half-stupefied manner, as if the splendours of the place had dazed her.

"Now, then, what shall we have?" asked Carroll, as they seated themselves at one of the marble-topped tables.

Both the girls replied that they did not know what to have.

"Would you like some coffee?" suggested Newton.

They did not mind if they did take some coffee.

"Or some chocolate?" said Carroll.

"I never tasted chocolate," replied Milly.

"No more have I, except in little sticks. Is it like cocoa?" inquired Jenny.

"Somewhat, only ever so much richer," replied Carroll.

"Well, we can't keep the waiter here all night," said Newton; "so please to decide on something as quickly as possible."

"I think I'll take chocolate," said Jenny.

"And I think I'll take chocolate," said Milly.

"I'll have black coffee, and small glass of brandy in it," said Newton.

"And so will I," exclaimed Mr. Carroll. "Waiter," said he, to one of those important functionaries, who was standing about two paces from the table, and waiting for orders with face immovable as if it had been cast in brass, eyes sharp enough to take in the whole room, and every person in it, at a glance, and ears of the acutest description, "bring two cups of chocolate and some tarts for these young ladies, and two cups of black coffee, with brandy, for us."

"Yes, sir," replied the waiter. "Two chocolates, tarts, two black coffees, and brandies."

The waiter soon returned with the refreshments ordered. The men sipped their brandied

coffee and smoked their cigars, and the girls alternately took mouthfuls of chocolate and tart, and declared both delicious. Plenty of lively chat filled up the intervals between the sips and mouthfuls. The sprightly manner of young people makes the dullest sentences that fall from their lips appear lively. Before they had finished their refreshments, they had arranged another meeting on the next night but one, on which occasion the two youths had promised to treat them to a theatre. Whether these two young couples exchanged kisses in some quiet street that night before they parted, is unknown; most likely they did.

Jenny was unaware of a pair of dark, jealous eyes that watched her from the Park to the *café*, waited impatiently outside the latter until she left it, and then followed her, without once withdrawing its angry gaze until it had seen the door of her lodging close upon her.

“Jolly little girl, Milly! Glad I picked her up,” exclaimed Newton, after the two girls had left them.

“Jenny’s a deal jollier,” answered Carroll. “What splendid eyes she has! and isn’t she a larky girl!”

"Yes; she has good eyes certainly, and she is a larky girl," rejoined Newton, "too larky for my taste. I infinitely prefer her more retiring companion."

"Ah, you're too refined," replied Mr. Carroll. "You'll soon have no nature at all in you."

"Well, each one to his taste. While I've eyes left in my head to admire little Milly, and a head to be turned by her beauty, I think I still have nature strong in me."

"Let's hope it won't be strong enough to do the poor girl any harm," exclaimed Carroll, laughing. "Good night."

The youths separated to go to their homes.

"What a merry fellow that curly-haired one is!" said Jenny to Milly, as they were hurrying on through the gas-lighted streets.

"What?" asked Milly, awaking from a fit of abstraction.

"Why, what's the matter? Don't you hear what I said?" replied her companion.

"No."

"I'm sure I spoke loud enough."

"I was thinking," said Milly.

"Thinking!" exclaimed Jenny, contemptuously. "I said, what a merry fellow that curly-haired one is!"

"Evans Evans?"

"Yes," answered Jenny, laughing.

"He is. But I prefer the other; he's not so frivolous."

"He did the sentimental to you all the evening, I suppose; said that you were an angel, and you were fool enough to believe it. There's more harm in that sort than in your merry, laughing fellows. You were thinking, you said. Yes, thinking of the spruce, blue-eyed young gentleman that has just left you. I advise you to be careful, and not to think about him too much. It's worse for poor work-girls to think of fine gentlemen than to dream of princes in fairy tales. It's all very well to get a pair of gloves, or some jewellery, or a theatre out of them; but, after that, keep 'em at a distance, says I. I watched you in the *café*. You're rather struck with that Mr. Brown, or whatever his name is. No doubt he's a very nice young man, and is very fascinating; but you keep your eyes open. He's dangerous! If he got you into trouble,



if I see rightly, he's not the man to help you out of it."

Milly listened to this harangue of her friend without attempting to interrupt her. She would have liked to have defended the character of her late companion, but she well knew that her tongue was no match for her friend's.

"I thought that you were on very good terms with your merry friend," said she, after a pause.

"Good terms, yes," replied the other; "but I'm not such a fool as to fall in love with him. I know what falling in love with a gentleman means. They never marry girls of our class, as a rule, however fond they may be of us. They'll keep us, if we're fools enough to let them, as long as we are pleasing to them; and then we can go to the workhouse, or die in the gutter, for all they care. No, no gentleman for me. I'd sooner have my Jack"—this was the name of the grocer's assistant—"than the best gentleman alive. He will never forsake me. He's true as steel."

"I don't think he'd have said the same about you, if he had seen you flirting to-night," remarked Milly, with quiet spite.

"I wouldn't have him know it for the world," answered Jenny, shuddering, "although there was no harm in it."

He did know it, though.

When Carroll reached home, he found that Gerald had retired for the night.

Carroll and Boyne did not see each other again until the evening on which the student and his friend Newton had promised to take the young girls to a theatre, when Carroll entered Gerald's rooms just after he had finished his tea.

"I vote that we take them to the 'Blaze and Weepers,'" said he, after he had related the adventure to Gerald. "They have a stirring melo-drama on there, with murders and icebergs, forgers and injured innocence, and all that sort of thing: that ought to please the damsels. There is plenty of improbable incident and high-flown sentiment; and, if I am not very much mistaken, that will be just the thing for them. They are not refined enough to appreciate comedy. I don't feel inclined to pay higher than pit: that's quite good enough for them, I'm sure."

Soon after this, Mr. Carroll departed. He

found his friend Newton and the two pretty damsels awaiting him at the place appointed. This was pleasing to him, for he abominated being kept waiting, although he invariably kept others waiting. He asked them if they had decided on what theatre they were going to. They had not. He proposed the "Blaze and Weepers"; and, in a few minutes, they were walking in the direction of that theatre. This also was pleasing to Mr. Carroll, for, notwithstanding his comedy-pretensions, he was fond of a good roaring melo-drama: your medical student always is. The next incident was not so pleasing to him. Newton and his companion stopped before a glove-shop. Carroll asked them why they did not proceed. Newton replied that they would as soon as Milly had bought a pair of gloves. Our merry friend felt rather chagrined at this. However, as he did not like to appear meaner than his fellow-student, he offered to buy Jenny a pair. The offer was, of course, accepted immediately, and the four entered the glove-shop. When they arrived at the theatre, Newton would not hear of their going to the pit; so Carroll, much against his will, had to pay for two places in

the upper boxes and for ices and cakes during the course of the evening. The girls laughed heartily at the farces, which opened and closed the performance, and wept at the pathetic, were terrified by the wonderfully strong situations, and were sent into a series of giggles by the low comic of the drama. The play being over, Newton would finish the evening with an oyster-supper. This met with no objection from Carroll, who, by this time, thought "that he might as well go in for a sheep as a lamb." On parting, they arranged to meet the young ladies on the following Sunday.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## A JEALOUS LOVER.

THE two girls had not long quitted their companions when they heard footsteps behind them, and, in a moment after, two fiery little eyes were fixed on Jenny's face, and an angry voice whispered in her ear,—“I hope you enjoyed your nice quiet evening with Mrs. Hopkins.” If the gaslights had burned a little brighter, it would have been seen that Jenny turned very pale. How she felt may be conceived from a remark that she afterwards made to her friend Milly,—“That she wished the pavement underneath her feet had opened and allowed the earth to swallow her up.” There must be something very serious the matter to make a young lady, or any one else, wish to return to the bowels of our common

mother. It was a very serious matter to poor Jenny, too, for the fiery little eyes and angry voice belonged to a man, and that man was her Jack, the grocer's assistant. No wonder she trembled and wished to sink into the earth, for she feared that he had caught her tripping—as, indeed, he had.

“I hope you had a nice quiet evening at Mrs. Hopkins's?” repeated Jack, more angrily than before.

Jenny quaked in her shoes. On the previous night she had told Jack that it was her intention to spend a “quiet evening” with a certain Mrs. Hopkins (an old lady of independent means, who occupied the front parlour of the house in which she and Milly resided), so that it would be impossible to meet him as usual on the next night. Jack heard all, and said nothing; but he determined to watch her. He allowed her to reproach him for disappointing her on the Sunday, without offering a word in his defence. His patience must have been tried pretty well, for she rated him soundly—as the fair sex usually do when they have done wrong themselves. The little man let slip no word by which she could even imagine that he

was aware of her adventure with Mr. Carroll. It struck him that the "quiet evening with Mrs. Hopkins" was merely an invention to keep him out of the way, whilst she had an interview with the gentleman with whom he had seen her in the Park. He watched near her door, saw her friend and herself come out, followed them to the meeting-place, thence to the theatre, entered the play-house after them, secured a place from which he could observe them without being seen by them, left when they left, waited outside the oyster-shop whilst they were inside, and, after they had bidden good-night to the medical students, joined them, ready to pour the whole of his bottled-up wrath upon the devoted head of the false Jenny. Upon ordinary occasions, he was a little thick-set man, with a chubby good-tempered face—a trifle more plethoric-looking than was good for him—and small bright dark eyes (the left of which was encircled by eyelids prone to winking whenever a pretty girl hove in sight). But, on this extraordinary occasion, he looked as if he were making desperate efforts to increase his dimensions in every possible way ; for his little eyes, twinkling with

wrath, protruded to their utmost extent between his widely opened lids ; his cheeks expanded ; the nostrils of his pug nose dilated ; his chest heaved, his muscles swelled ; and he had drawn himself up to his full height. The trousers of the irate little gentleman were of a rather loud plaid pattern ; his coat and hat were a trifle old fashioned ; and the pin which reposed so majestically in his bright blue scarf was undoubtedly of Birmingham manufacture. Truly, when compared with the young gentlemen the girls had just left, he looked a bit vulgar. Nevertheless, he had a good honest heart beating within his little chest ; and it was a shame of Miss Jenny to deceive him so. If she had for a moment thought that he would have discovered her, she would not have done it. A flirtation with a young man occupying a higher position in life than her own, together with the pleasing adjuncts of presents and treats to places of amusement, was perfectly harmless in Jenny's eyes (as it is in the eyes of of many better-educated and worst-hearted girls) ; still she by no means relished the idea of the knowledge of her having been engaged in any such harmless freaks coming to her lover's ears.



"You're not in any hurry to answer one!" exclaimed the very indignant Jack.

"Law!" said Jenny, looking at his face as innocently as if she had never, for a single moment, given the young grocer cause for jealousy; her fearful heart fluttered, though, for all her assumed coolness, "how you frightened me, Jack! Whoever would have thought of seeing you to-night?"

"You didn't, anyhow," answered Jack.

"Dear me! you speak very crossly to-night," said Jenny.

"Enough to make one cross, when there are so many liars in the world," replied the irate lover.

Jack knew that there were a great many liars in the world before, was aware that he was a liar himself sometimes, both in the way of business and in the way of pleasure; yet he had never felt particularly cross until he had discovered an extra liar in the person of the young girl by his side.

Jenny now knew for certain that he had found her out; she was somewhat abashed, but she determined to adopt a high-handed tone.

"Well!" exclaimed she, sharply. "What right have you to be cross? The liars don't concern you, do they?"

"Oh, no; not at all!" answered Jack, bitterly. "Not when they say they're going to spend a nice quiet evening with an old lady of the name of Hopkins, that lives in the front parlour; and don't do nothing of the sort. Oh, no; no concern of mine, of course!"

"Don't speak in that nasty tone. How do you know that we haven't come out for a walk after we have left her?"

"A pretty time of night for two young girls, that call themselves respectable"—Jack emphasized this word in a very sarcastic manner—"to be walking the streets alone!"

"As long as we conduct ourselves properly, what does it matter to any one what time we walk the streets?" answered Jenny, indignantly.

"It's not my business, certainly," answered Jack, shrugging his shoulders, and trying to assume an air of indifference, when his poor heart was bursting with jealousy; then, after a short pause, he added, petulantly,—“You could walk the streets all night, for all I

cared. What the devil should it matter to me?"

"If you're going to talk in that way," said Jenny, "we'd be better pleased with your room than your company; wouldn't we, Milly?"

Milly, who had been clinging tremblingly to her friend's arm during the above conversation, only trembled more, and fixed her eyes more steadfastly upon the pavement.

"No doubt you would prefer the company of those two gentlemen, that took you to the play, to mine!" said the little grocer.

This observation caused the two young damsels to feel very uneasy. Jenny did not know what course to take.

"Ha! ha!" continued the little man, with a horrid laugh, "I knew well enough you weren't going to see any Mrs. Hopkins, so I watched you! I saw your little game on Sunday night, when you walked with these same two young swells in the Park, and then went with 'em to the *Café*. You didn't know, when you blew me up for disappointing you, that I was up to your larks. You didn't tell me that you was very glad I didn't come, for that you'd picked up with a young nob that

was going to treat you to the theatre. Oh, no! You were going down below, to Mrs. Hopkins; so you were very, very sorry that you couldn't meet me as usual the next night, and very, very sorry that I didn't know Mrs. Hopkins, for then you could have got me an invite. You little thought, when I heard all and said nothing, that I knew of your Sunday-night figary in the Park. Knowing it, I determined to watch you; and I have watched you, too. I've watched you from your house to your meeting-place, and from your meeting-place to your theatre, and from your theatre to your oyster-shop; watched until I saw them two nobs leave you, and then I trotted after you just to tell you it's no good telling me any more lies, for I know all your goings on."

The little man shook his head, and looked at her in such a manner as to imply that he was not going to be humbugged by her. Before this determined look and shake of the head, Jenny felt half inclined to own her faults, and to ask his forgiveness; but these last aroused her wilful little spirit again.

"And where's the harm in taking a walk in

the Park, and going to a theatre with a gentleman, pray?" inquired the pretty delinquent.

"No harm at all," replied he, ironically, "for the woman who is going to be my wife to go on so!"

"Then, I suppose, because I'm going to be your wife, I mustn't speak to anybody but yourself soon?"

"Not to strange gentlemen."

"I don't want to be your wife!" exclaimed the girl, petulantly.

"All right, then—don't!" answered the man.

"Good-night," said the girl, coldly.

The man walked on by her side for some minutes in silence; then he gave one look at her proud face, muttered "good-night," crossed to the other side of the road, and hurried away in the direction of his home.

Poor Jack was miserable enough that night; and his Jenny sobbed so, that Milly, who did all she could to comfort her, thought that she would kill herself with grief. After a time, she cried herself to sleep, and Jack, exhausted by the various plans of revenge and suicide which his feverish brain had formed, fell into

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the same sweet state, and dreamed that his darling's lips were close to his; and balmy slumber spread the mantle of forgetfulness over these two unhappy ones, as well as over most of the other inhabitants of this hemisphere.

## CHAPTER IX.

## A RECONCILIATION.

THE next night the little grocer was impatiently marching up and down the pavement outside the shop at which his sweetheart was employed. Presently the "young ladies" of the establishment came out, and Jenny amongst them. It only needed a glance at her countenance to see the vexed state of her mind; however, the moment she espied her lover, after just allowing one little gleam of joy and thankfulness to shoot from her eyes, she assumed a rather haughty demeanour. There was a sorrowful expression on the little man's face, but he was not to be daunted by this display. He walked straight up to her, and greeted her as affectionately as if the scene on the previous night had never occurred. Jenny

was very dignified, and expressed great surprise at seeing him, after what had taken place between them. Now this conduct on the lady's part would have certainly widened the breach between them, had not Jack, who had been thinking over the matter the whole of the day, and had come to the conclusion that he loved the little wicked flirt too much to give her up, and that her fault was not so great as to be beyond the pale of his forgiveness, been determined not to be offended at any little exhibitions of temper that it might please her to play off on him.

They walked on side by side, without either of them uttering a word for some little time. It is true that Jack looked at Jenny often, and that Jenny looked at Jack, and wondered how he had slept the night before, and whether their little squabble had made him as miserable as it had her; but, whenever she thought that their eyes were likely to meet, she turned hers quickly towards some object that they were passing. The stubborn girl, although she was dying to be friendly with him again, tried to cheat herself into the belief that she wished to have nothing more to do with him. At last



she happened to turn her eyes towards Jack at the same instant that Jack was taking a stolen glance at her. She tried hard to keep up the appearance of indignation, but those loving, appealing eyes, that were looking so wistfully at hers, broke down the feeble barrier with which she strove to conceal her real feelings. Gradually the pout of her lips grew less, until at last it disappeared altogether; and her pretty eyes, now filling with tears, showed how much the poor girl longed for a reconciliation.

"We're friends again, Jenny?" said Jack, lovingly.

"Yes, Jack, if you wish it," replied Jenny, smiling through her swimming eyes.

Did not Jack wish it, and was not Jenny glad? In another moment they had linked arms, and were walking on as affectionately as if there were no such things as lovers' quarrels in existence. Let us hope that they will walk as happily through life.

"If you were surprised at seeing me, you're not sorry!" exclaimed the triumphant little grocer.

"No, Jack dear," replied Jenny, giving

his arm a gentle press, which sent a thrill of ecstasy throughout the length and breadth of the honest little man's body; then, after a pause, she said, in a low voice, full of subdued emotion,—“You forgive me, my dearest Jack? I didn't mean any harm; upon my word I didn't. Say you forgive me.”

“I do, Jenny, perfectly,” replied Jack, earnestly, “what there is to forgive—and that's not much—for I know you never meant any harm”; and he clasped her hand between both of his.

“That I didn't, Jack. But I'll never behave so foolishly again. You've no idea of the pain that it has caused me. Last night I thought my heart would break.”

“And I,” said Jack, “was debating whether I should live till the morning; for life without you seemed so awful.”

“Do you love me so much?” asked Jenny.

“You know I do,” replied the stout little grocer.

“I believe I should have jumped off Westminster Bridge, if you had not forgiven me,” exclaimed Jenny.

“It's all right again, now.”

"Didn't you feel frightfully angry with me, though?"

"Well," replied Jack, after hesitating a little, "I did; and as for that fellow you were with, if—if—"

"What?" inquired Jenny, smiling roguishly.

"If he'd been near me, and I'd had a knife in my hand," answered her valiant little lover, making a tremendous effort to impart a terrific expression to his good-humoured face, "I'd have killed him!"

Poor Carroll would certainly have turned pale had he heard the grocer's remark. A deep tragedy was doomed never to be acted by the absence of the medical student at that particular moment—whenever it was—that the jealous and revengeful Jack felt such a great inclination to put a knife into him.

"Why, what a naughty man!" exclaimed Jenny. "Then you'd have been hung."

"Yes, I should have swung for it," answered Jack, composedly.

"And then what should I have done?" asked the girl, half playfully and half solemnly.

"Found another lover, I suppose," replied

the little man, laughing. The thought raised anything but a pleasant feeling within him, however.

"It's no good to keep on supposing and supposing," said his companion.

"No," replied Jack. "Now we're so happy and comfortable, let us stick to facts, which, when I tell 'em to you, I've no doubt will make us both more happy and more comfortable than ever. I didn't meet you at the time I promised last Sunday."

"No," said Jenny, hanging down her head.

"Well," continued her lover, "would you like to know the reason why I didn't meet you? It won't make you jealous."

The rogue gave her a sly look.

"Come, be quick," exclaimed Jenny, with a pretty gesture of impatience. "Tell me."

"Why, when I left you on the Saturday night, I went home—" The little man stopped.

"I should hope you did," said Jenny, authoritatively.

"And when I got home," continued Jack, "I found a letter awaiting me. It was from my uncle Thomas. I've told you about him

before, you know—he that has a shop in my line, and no children.”

“ Yes, I remember.”.

“ He wrote, saying that, as he wasn’t at all in such good health as he would like to be, he was afraid he wasn’t going to be one of this world long, and asked me to dinner there on the next day, as he ’d something very particular to say to me. Well, a quarter to one A.M. the next day found me giving a very genteel rat-tat-tat at the private door of uncle Thomas’s establishment; for, of course, I hadn’t the heart to refuse the request of a sick man, and that man a relation, and an elder too, especially as the invalid was a man of property, destitute of such incumbrances as a wife and family, and much more bothered by his other nephews and nieces than by myself. I thought there might be a chance of his putting me down in a corner of his will, if I minded my p’s and q’s, and did not contradict him. The door was opened by a smart little servant—too pretty a gal to be at a respectable old bachelor’s house, if he were not such an old and feeble one. She was a pretty gal.”

“ Then you were carrying on a little game,

as well as myself, on Sunday," said Jenny, interrupting him.

"No, I wasn't," replied the little man, quickly. "I didn't even wink at her—upon my Davy, I didn't. So you needn't be jealous."

"I leave jealousy for men," exclaimed Jenny, smiling.

"Ah! well, women have a pretty good slice of it in their composition, as well as men," retorted Jack; "and it's no wonder men are jealous when women—"

"Well, well, well; we won't say anything more about it," interposed Jenny.

"To resume," said Jack: "after I had told my name to the pretty servant girl, I was requested to follow her upstairs, which I did, and was ushered by her into the drawing-room, where, in a big arm-chair, with a big, swaddled-up, gouty foot resting on a thing like a small sofa, sat uncle Thomas, all in state. His face was white, cheeks sunken, eyes prominent; and there was a nasty glassy look about them that I didn't at all like. His poor hands were as thin as thin (you could see through the palms almost), and that stomach,

that he used to have, had gone away to nothing. His clothes hung about his limbs as if they had been made for a man several sizes larger—as indeed they were, for the time before that I saw uncle Thomas there was fat enough about him to get him a prize at Smithfield, if he'd only been a pig. Well, the moment he caught sight of me, his eyes brightened up, and he made an effort to look jolly and cheerful, like he used to. 'John,' said he to me, stretching out his hand, and putting something of his old heartiness into his manner and his voice, 'how d' ye do, my lad? I'm very glad to see you,' and he put his hand into mine (what a poor skin-and-grief hand his was!), and shook it as warmly as he had strength to do. 'You see I'm a prisoner, John—the gout, John, the gout. The gout's a bad companion, John, a very bad companion.' He gave a kind of sigh, as if he vividly remembered the last twinge it had given his big toe. 'Take a chair, my lad, close by me.'—'Thank you, uncle,' said I, as I did so. 'The doctors say it's all come of my drinking too much port,' said uncle Thomas (I do most decidedly remember that

the poor old gentleman's face used to be of a good port-winey colour, so no doubt the doctors were right; but, of course, I didn't tell him so). 'But I don't believe in doctors,' continued he, with a contemptuous turn of his pale-pinky lip, which seemed as if it hadn't got any blood in it. 'Doctors always say that you bring your illnesses on yourself—as if port could make any one ill, when you don't take too much of it! And that's what I rarely did, for I seldom got drunk, however much I took. No, thank God, no matter what I've taken overnight, I've been generally as right as a trivet the next morning, and able to eat as good a breakfast as any one would wish to until now lately, when my pecker certainly hasn't been as good as it used to be, although I've tried all I could to keep it up.' He looked very melancholy as he said this, did uncle Thomas. After he'd looked at his gouty foot a bit, and twiddled the tassels of his arm-chair about with his fingers, and heaved one or two sighs, which almost brought tears into my eyes, he gave himself a twist and a shake, as if to get rid of his malady and his bad spirits, and said,—'Let's have a glass of



sherry before dinner, my lad.'—'Thank you, uncle,' said I, for after my walk to his house, and the sight of him, you may be sure that I was in need of a reviver. 'All right, my boy,' replied he; 'you'll find a bottle in the cheffeneer-drawer, and you'll find glasses on the sideboard. Just pull out the bottle, and fill a glass for me and a glass for yourself.' I obeyed his orders in a twink, and in another twink we were comfortably sipping our sherry. 'If all the doctors in the world were to declare, upon their dying oaths, that this glass of sherry has done me harm, I wouldn't believe 'em!' exclaimed my uncle, emphatically, as he passed his empty glass to me. 'I know it's done me good; I feel it has! Please fill it again, nephew.' When I had complied with his request, he continued, 'Doctors say this isn't good for you, and that isn't good for you; drench you with physic; pocket your fee, and then leave you to get well of your own accord. They're rank impostors!'—'Why do you employ them, if you don't believe in them?' asked I. 'Why, my lad,' replied he, 'people lose their strength of mind, and do many foolish things when they're weak and ill.'

Soon after, dinner came in, and with it Mrs. Burridge, uncle's housekeeper. She was very polite and pleasant to me—too pleasant by half, I thought. Her little delicate attentions to my uncle were astonishing; but, strange to say, the old gentleman didn't seem to appreciate them as he ought to have done. He was very gruff and snappish to the lady, and gave me to understand by a series of significant telegraphic gestures, such as angry glances at her when her head was turned from him, side-winks at me, and such-like manœuvres, that her presence was not agreeable to him. She's a comely, middle-aged body, with a good-looking face and not too stout a figure. Very nice dinner she served up, too,—roast beef (ribs—a beautiful joint), beans and potatoes, and after that apple-pie. Uncle has some splendid ale—as good a glass of ale as ever one would wish to taste, clear and sparkling as—as the yellow glass in a church-window when it's been lately cleaned. During dinner, I discovered that Mrs. Burridge was a teetotal card, and also a desperately religious sort of body. With all her politeness and kindness, she seemed to be continually talking at uncle Thomas about

the wickedness of drinking intoxicating liquors, especially port ; and she let drop some very pregnant (and rather rude, also) observations, meant for my benefit, I presume, on the harm that ale did young men."

"Impudent old thing!" exclaimed Jenny.  
"Didn't you shut her up?"

"No," answered the little grocer ; "I didn't take that trouble. When you meet with teetotallers, or bigoted people of any kind, it's always the best way to let them talk themselves dry ; or, if they can't talk themselves dry, let them talk on till Doomsday, and pay no attention to them. I agreed with all her very profound observations, both with those upon the eternal damnation of the lost, and the likelihood of beer leading to the everlasting perdition of its drinkers ; and continued calmly to quaff my ale, and also to do my share in the consumption of a very good bottle of port that uncle Thomas had had placed upon the table with the dessert, which was greengages and apricots."

"Oh, weren't we swell !" interposed Jenny.

"Ah, that we were, my girl," said Jack, with a look of importance. "You must go to

uncle's to see things done in the right style. He's a bit of an epicure, he is."

"A poor girl that has to get her living by dress-making isn't grand enough to see your swell relations."

"Isn't she, that's all!" answered Jack. "It's not many grand relations, as you call 'em, that I have. Uncle Thomas is the only one that will recognize me. All the rest are too proud to know me. Well, I don't want them to: I can exist without their acquaintance. My mother, you know, committed a *four pow*,—that is, she married beneath her, for my father was only a journeyman tailor (although he was a very handsome one). Well, by doing this she offended all her relations, who thought she ought to have done better in the matrimonial market. They all cut her except uncle Thomas, who lent father the money to set up in a small business of his own. Father and mother kept up a friendly correspondence with him until they died. When I came to London, I took the liberty of calling on him, and was received with every sign of welcome. He got me my present situation, and has acted very kindly to me in several

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ways. He gave me a *cart blank* invitation."

"What's that?" inquired Jenny.

"Why, it's," replied Jack, in a hesitating manner, pushing back his hat from over his brow, as if the weight of his head-covering prevented his brain from forming a correct definition, "it's a 'go-when-you-like' invitation for any Sunday."

"Then a *cart blank* is only good for Sundays."

"Yes, it is!" exclaimed Jack, rather testily. He began to find the explanations that Jenny required a little troublesome. "A *cart blank* is good for week-days; only, I only got one for Sundays."

"Well," said Jenny, soothingly, "don't be cross. I only asked for information."

"Then you shouldn't ask such puzzling questions," replied Jack. "How am I to know what everything means? I only say what other people say, not because I know what everything I say means."

"You go on telling me about your visit to your uncle's, and I won't ask you any more troublesome questions."

"After we had finished our dessert, Mrs. Burridge," said Jack, resuming his narration, "departed to take her class at Sunday-school. When we were alone together, my uncle said, 'You don't come to see me so regularly as you used to, John. How is it?' I was rather confused (the true reason was, that I had been out with you most Sundays), and stammered out that I was afraid I was making too free with his kindness; to which he replied that he suspected I had found younger companions, and that he could not blame me, as an old fogey, like himself, must be very poor society for a person of my age. After a while, he asked me how I liked my situation, and what were my plans for the future. In answer to which last question I could only say that I had no particular plans at all, except he called doing my best to earn an honest penny 'a plan.' At this, he took a sip at his port, and was silent for two or three minutes. Suddenly he raised his head, looked at me very knowingly, and exclaimed, 'Mrs. Burridge is a very nice-spoken woman, isn't she?'—'Yes,' I replied, 'if she didn't say so much in praise of water-drinkers.'—'Bah!' said my uncle, making

a grimace, as if he swallowed something nauseous, 'every glass of port I drink, when she is near me, I think is port and water. I don't like your water wet ones, John, not at all.' He shook his head in a melancholy manner, and was silent for a few more minutes, after the expiration of which period he looked at me so straight in the face, and for so long a time, that I began to feel uncomfortable, and had just commenced to wriggle about in my chair, and get red in the face, when he said, 'John, I've had my eye on you for some time; and, as far as I can see, there's no reason why I shouldn't believe you to be a very honest young man.' Then he stopped, and gave me another hard look. I replied in a very confused sort of way, that I was very glad to hear that he had such a good opinion of me. He said that he shouldn't think of saying so, if he hadn't; and also intimated that, as I was his sister's son, and the only one of his relations that wasn't in easy circumstances (he made a mistake there, for I felt in uncommonly easy circumstances with that good port of his in front of me), and had no particular future prospects, he, being a bachelor (he was jilted

in his early youth, and took a great dislike to women, in the way of partners for life, ever afterwards), felt it his duty to do something for me. I waited in wonderment to hear what was to follow. By-and-by it came: he said, with a sort of tremble in his voice, and a look that affected me greatly, that he was an old man, that his health was failing him greatly (as anybody, indeed, could see at a glance), and that he was afraid that he wasn't to be one of this world much longer; whereupon I told him that I hoped he was safe for a hundred, on which he smiled mournfully, and said it wasn't to be, which, of course, I knew well enough, only having made the remark to try and cheer him. 'And, John,' at last said he, 'since I am in this helpless state, it is necessary that I should have a manager that I can depend upon. Will you take the situation? I'll give you a good salary, and I'll leave you the business on will.' For some minutes I could not speak for surprise and gratitude; and even when I could find utterance, I could only blurt out, 'Thank you, uncle!' I suppose he could see that his sudden kindness had taken away what poor powers of speech I usually



possessed, for he gave me a benign smile, and continued, 'Now that little affair is settled to the satisfaction of both of us, we will pass on to one that will nearly concern our comfort. Mrs. Burridge must have her walking ticket.' I stared. 'Yes,' repeated he, emphatically, 'Mrs. Burridge must have her walking ticket. You don't know what a tyrant she has been to me for some years, John.'—'How is it you didn't get rid of her before, then?' asked I. 'Ah, my boy,' said he, with a sigh, 'you don't know what a trouble it is to get rid of an old servant. I've thought upon it often, but I could never summon up the courage. In the first place, I dreaded the bother I should have to undergo in getting another; and, in the second, I thought I might only change for the worse. You would laugh if I told you of all the little dodges she has been up to to try and entrap me into matrimony. I wonder she didn't marry me by force. She's left off those little games with me now, though, and amuses herself instead with courting Methodist parsons and teetotal big-wigs. She sometimes brings some of them here to convert me; but, although I treat them with all civility, I soon give them

to understand that they may as well leave me alone, that their eloquence is all wasted on me, and that I'll die, as I have lived, a staunch Church of England man—not a believer in these new-fangled Popish notions—and a good old toper; and, that I'd never turn dissenter nor teetotaller, even if there was no other religion but Methody stuff, and no other liquor but water in the world. I impress on them that I don't mind a little friendly conversation with them, but that they must not try any of their rigs on with me. I don't exactly like to tell Mrs. Burr ridge I won't see them, for that would seem uncivil, since she brings them here as her friends. You see, you can't tell a person that has been in your employment for such a long time that she mustn't see her friends in your house. Still these fellows are a nuisance to me, and that is one of the chief reasons why I want to get rid of her. When you come here, you must quarrel with her, and make her give notice, or give her notice, for I shall put the management of everything in your hands now.' Just then a thought entered my head that Mrs. Burr ridge could be got rid of easier. I told uncle Thomas that I thought I should

have no difficulty in finding him another housekeeper, if he had no objection to her being a married woman." The little man looked so knowingly at Jenny, that she burst out laughing. "Uncle Thomas said that he had no objection to her being a married woman, so I at once informed him, to his intense astonishment, that, with his approval, I'd make a lady of my acquaintance Mrs. John Jennings with the greatest possible speed, and install her as the new housekeeper. He asked a good many questions about the lady, which I answered as favourably as I could. I didn't think then that before I went to bed that night she'd give me the heartache, or perhaps I might not have given her such a good character."

An entreating look, the gentle pressure of a loving, penitent arm, and a soft "Don't chaff me about that, Jack," made the little grocer glow with pleasure, and also abstain from making any more irritating remarks.

"He was so well satisfied," continued Jack, "that he requested me to introduce her to him on the earliest opportunity, and I'm going to take you there to-night. Cabby!" bawled Mr. Jennings, to a hansom-cab driver who was passing.

Cabby drew up to the side of the pavement, and Jack threw open the doors of the vehicle, and placed himself in front of the wheel, so as to protect the dress of his beloved from the dirt thereon. Much to the young grocer's surprise, the young lady hesitated about stepping into the hansom.

"Come," exclaimed he, impatiently, "we haven't too much time."

"But you really are not going to introduce me to your uncle to-night?" said Jenny.

"I am," replied Jack.

"But I'm not dressed."

"The usual lady's excuse."

"I must go home first," protested Jenny.

After a short discussion the gentleman was obliged to give in; and the cab, with the lovers inside it, proceeded to the lady's residence, and, after waiting outside it for about twenty minutes (during which time she was busily occupied in what her lover called "titivating herself"), loaded as before, was driven forthwith to Mr. Jennings' uncle's. Before the old gentleman and Jenny parted that night, they were capital friends. The liveliness of the young

girl seemed to infuse new life into him ; he quite forgot his malady ; he laughed at her brusque humour, was delighted at the way in which she bantered his nephew Jack, and declared, in a low whisper (when Miss Jenny was bidding farewell to Mrs. BurrIDGE) to that gentleman that he could not have made a better choice, for that a merry, good-tempered woman, with none of your finical present-day humbug, was worth her weight in gold ; in which opinion, of course, Jack coincided. Mrs. BurrIDGE was also charmed with the young lady, and expressed herself to that effect to uncle Thomas, as she poured out his last nightcap ; however, when she heard—the old gentleman managed to summon up courage enough to tell her of the fact himself—that in a very short time she would have to abdicate in favour of Jenny, she changed her opinion, and, amidst fumes of rage, and hopes “that she had done her duty whilst she had been in the gentleman’s service,” muttered something about an “artful young minx, that had played her cards well with a silly young chap and a stupid, drunken old jackass.” On that night uncle Thomas remembered that she

consumed a great quantity of brandy-and-water (medicinally, of course), and complained of severe spasms.

Jack was so elated with the success of the evening, that he would have another hansom (notwithstanding protests of Jenny about extravagance, &c.) to convey them to his sweetheart's home, and actually paid the man so magnificently, that he (the driver) told him he was "a real gentleman," which flattery made Jack more elated than ever.

"We've done the trick," said he, to Jenny, as she was waiting for the door to be opened.

"I think we have."

"Good night."

Jack went to his grocery establishment, and Jenny disappeared through the doorway. The individual who was unfastening the latch, boasted about hearing a very loud smacking of lips; and a policeman, who was passing down the opposite side of the street, stopped exactly opposite that door, and took a hard look at the two young people, who were engaged in the pleasing and edifying operation of kissing one another. There was happiness in two houses that night. Jenny, after

she had recounted, for the eleventh time, amidst tears and smiles (both of joy), the adventures of the evening to her friend Milly, fell asleep, and most probably—one cannot be quite sure about dreams—dreamed of a smart wedding-dress and of Jack. Jack, that very same night, gave his employer notice that he should have to leave at once (and, as trade was rather slack, the employer made no objections to his sudden departure), and then went straight to bed, and dreamed of Jenny and his uncle's grocery establishment; and visions of the comfort which he was to expect after the exodus of Mrs. Burridge, and her Methodist parsons and her teetotallers, visited uncle Thomas's slumbers. Under uncle Thomas's roof there was one person miserable, and that individual was Mrs. Burridge. Tormenting thoughts of the ingratitude of men, and the frowardness of the young women of the present generation, of the pretty sum that she had at her banker's, and the numerous tricks by which she had contrived to defraud the old gentleman during the years that she had been in his service, frightened Morpheus so greatly that he declined to embrace her.

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A few days later Jack and Jenny were married, by special licence, and they at once took up their abode at the house of uncle Thomas; the shop being thenceforth carried on under the direction of the young grocer, and the household management being consigned to the care of his young wife.



## CHAPTER X.

## A SATURDAY'S HALF-HOLIDAY.

ON the following Saturday afternoon, when Boyne returned from the city, he found Carroll awaiting him in his room.

"It's a fine afternoon, old fellow," remarked the student.

"It is," replied Boyne, wondering what was coming next.

"Mompas and I think of going for a walk in Kensington Gardens. Will you come with us?"

"Yes, with pleasure," answered Gerald.

"All right, then. I'll go and tell Mompas to make haste and get ready. He's always an awful time dressing!"

Off ran Mr. Carroll to his friend's apartment.

In a few minutes he returned bursting with laughter.

"Whatever is the matter?" inquired Gerald.

"Why!" exclaimed Carroll, throwing himself into an arm-chair,—“Mompas is getting himself up most elaborately, with clean paper collar, clean paper cuffs, magnificent scarf, new bags, but unfortunately—as he had not put on his coat and waistcoat—I discovered that his shirt was a ‘summer’ one, worn thin by many washings, and provided with several holes in the back for ventilating purposes.”

Another roar of laughter followed, in the midst of which Mr. Mompas made his appearance.

“Now, you man of paper,” was the medical student’s greeting to him, “what a time you’ve been!”

“I can’t dress in five minutes, like you can,” replied the Customs clerk. “I don’t suppose we shall be back until late, so we had better order something for supper before we go out. What shall it be?”

“The oyster season has commenced,” exclaimed Mr. Carroll, sententiously.

“Oysters are so confoundedly dear, and they are not at all satisfying,” objected Mr. Mompas.

“Then, we must fill up with bread-and-butter and cheese: the old lady is sure to have some cheese in the house.”

“Well, then, we’ll have a dozen each,” said Mr. Mompas, slowly, as if he were calculating the number of paper collars which the dozen of oysters would deprive him of.

“No!” exclaimed Mr. Carroll, indignantly. “Whatever are you thinking of, Mompas? A dozen each? Why a dozen is a mere flea-bite! We’ll have two dozen each, if I pay for them myself.”

As Boyne thought that two dozen each would be none too many, Mompas was obliged to acquiesce; whereupon Mr. Carroll proceeded to the head of the stairs, and requested Mrs. Bokes to lay supper for three in his room, and to provide six dozen of the best “natives,” three pots of stout, three lemons, and plenty of bread-and-butter. Upon her replying that she would do this, he returned to his friends in the parlour; and a few minutes afterwards a young lady on the opposite side of the way, who perhaps would have been better employed in mending her stockings, saw the trio pass out of Mrs. Bokes’s door and march up the street arm-

in-arm, and wasted fully an hour and a half afterwards in day-dreams, in which she connected herself alternately with each of the three young men in the capacity of wife.

They had scarcely got clear of the street when Mr. Carroll expressed a great desire for a cigar. Mr. Mompas, who was thinking of the cost of his share in the six dozen of oysters, considered that pipes would do well enough until they reached the "swell" thoroughfares, on which the medical student said that he was a stingy fellow, and that he (Mr. Carroll) would sooner—if he wanted to economize—smoke a pipe among the "swells" than among the "cads."

They entered a tobacconist's shop. Mr. Carroll requested the man to show him some "fourpenny" cigars. The tobacconist placed a box of them in front of the medical student.

"Haven't you any others?" inquired Mr. Carroll.

Another box was opened, and placed before him.

"I don't much like the look of these," said the student, elevating his nose slightly.

"I place before you the best cigars in my

shop," answered the man, with a self-satisfied smile, "and you don't like them; and then I place cigars of an inferior quality before you, and you don't like them. What am I to do to please you?"

"Give me a penny 'Pickwick,'" replied Carroll, drily.

The man stared at him with astonishment.

"Give me a penny 'Pickwick,'" reiterated Carroll.

"Oh, certainly, sir," replied the shopman, with an ironical smile playing about his mouth.

After examining half the "Pickwicks" in the box, the student selected one of them, paid for it, and moved towards the door, followed by his friends, who could scarcely refrain from laughing at his coolness and the tobacco-vendor's discomfiture.

"That's the way to serve a consequential fellow who thinks nobody can tell a good cigar except himself. He's lost several shillings by his bumptiousness," exclaimed Mr. Carroll (sufficiently loud for the man to hear every word) as they were leaving the door-mat. "I'm not quite so ignorant of a good cigar as

the old Scotchman, who had given five thousand pounds towards the building of a church, was of the Lord's Prayer, when he said that the beginning of it was, 'How doth the little busy bee improve each shining hour!' I can tell tobacco from cabbage-leaf."

He threw the penny "Pickwick" into the gutter, and then led the way to another tobacconist's, where he was more successful.

"How awfully jolly it must be to be one of those swells!" observed Mr. Mompas, as they were proceeding along Rotten Row.

"Much jollier not to be one of them," exclaimed Mr. Carroll. He was a thorough-paced Radical, and utterly detested anything in the shape of hereditary aristocracy.

"I shan't argue with you," replied the Government clerk. "I know that you are past argument. I only state that it must be very comfortable to have plenty of money, and nothing to do but to amuse oneself and to eat good dinners."

"I don't object to having plenty of money, or to eating good dinners," growled Carroll; "but I do object to the law of primogeniture, which is the backbone of our useless and pro-

gress-impeding aristocracy, and without which it would collapse and sink to its proper level. What's your opinion of the aristocracy?" asked the student of Gerald.

"That the English nation could exist very comfortably without it. It is neither so useful nor so ornamental as itself, its toadies, and the poor fools who scrape and bow down before it conceive it to be. Most of its intellect has been absorbed by excessive luxury and inter-marriages," replied Boyne.

"Why you're as bad as Carroll," said Mompas.

"Shut up, you toady," exclaimed the medical student, with a melo-dramatic look. Then he commenced a long invective against society in general, and only stopped when he saw Mompas about to lift his hat to two ladies who were passing, whereupon he placed his fingers on the hinder part of the brim and prevented the Custom-house official from making a most elegant salute. The gentleman was very much confused; the ladies smiled, nodded (one of them blushed), and passed on.

"Is that where you go to dinner of a Sunday?" asked Carroll.

"I wish you wouldn't play off those tricks," exclaimed Mompas, angrily. "They make a fellow look so foolish."

"My intention, my dear fellow," replied Carroll, coolly.

"I don't like such pranks played off on me," said the indignant Mompas.

"I won't do it again; so don't be cross, old fellow."

Mr. Mompas muttered something about his not being cross, and immediately recovered his usual equanimity of temper.

Presently Gerald saw an old acquaintance of his coming towards them. In his present altered condition, Boyne wished to be forgotten by all his old companions. He determined to pass this one without taking any notice of him, so he paid great attention to Mr. Carroll's conversation (he was talking, as usual), and kept his eyes firmly fixed upon that gentleman's face. His old acquaintance stared at him, and Gerald knew that he was staring at him, but he passed by without turning his eyes in his direction. His friend, a good-humoured looking, well-dressed young gentleman, was not to be put off in this



fashion. He immediately followed Gerald, and tapped him on the shoulder. Gerald was obliged to turn round.

"Why, Boyne, old boy, do you mean to cut me?" exclaimed the acquaintance, stretching out his hand cordially towards him.

Gerald asked Mompas and Carroll to excuse him for a few minutes, and then joined his old companion.

"I haven't seen you for an age," said his old friend.

"No," replied Gerald; "I am not often in this part of the town now."

"I really believe that you intended to cut me."

"I may as well confess that I did, for I prefer cutting a man to being cut by him."

"Whatever could induce you to think that I should cut you?"

"You are aware, I suppose, of the change in my circumstances?"

"Yes; and I'm very sorry. But I did not think that you had such a mean opinion of me as to believe me capable of forsaking an old friend for such a reason."

"Genteel poverty is often unwarrantably

sensitive," remarked Boyne, with a smile. "Besides, a city clerk cannot afford such expensive associates."

"I think it unkind of you not to come and see me once now and then."

"I'd come and see you at any time; but I am never sure that you will be alone, and I don't care about meeting any of the old set again."

"I wish you would come."

"I really cannot," replied Boyne, emphatically.

"Then you don't mind my coming to see you?"

"Certainly not. There is my address."

"I shall drop in soon."

"Mind and not come earlier than six in the evening. Those two gentlemen," Boyne referred to Mompas and Carroll, "lodge in the same house as I do. One is a medical student; the other a Government clerk. They are very good fellows—good, honest gentlemen, although I have no doubt to your eyes they look rather peculiar."

"They do look rather—eccentric," replied the friend, laughing.

"I must bid you good-bye, for I must not keep them waiting any longer," said Boyne.

"Good-bye, old fellow. I can't tell you how delighted I am to see you again. It won't be long before you will receive a visit from me."

The two old companions parted, and Gerald rejoined his new friends.

"Who was that horrid swell?" inquired Mr. Carroll.

"Only an old friend of mine," answered Boyne.

"Sprig of nobility, I suppose—son of an earl, a marquis, or a duke? Why didn't you introduce Mompas to him? You'd have made him feel bursting with pride for a whole week."

"He is only the son of a barrister."

"Ah, son of a man that has the woolsack in his eye. Anybody could tell that, if he wasn't a sprig of nobility, he hoped to be one."

"You really misjudge him," said Carroll.

"How could any one misjudge a man with the 'ha! ha!' air?"

"There certainly is a dash of puppyism in

him, but that does not prevent his being a good fellow."

"You ought to know more about him than a person who, like myself, has only had the opportunity of observing his exterior for a few minutes, so I must accept your opinion about him. If he's a good fellow, that's all he need want to be. As for a puppyism, that's nothing. We all have our little puppyisms. Mine is slovenliness,"—Mr. Carroll looked anything but slovenly at the time,—"Mompas's is toadyism,"—the Customs clerk gave Carroll an angry glance,—“and yours, I take it, Boyne, is a studious desire to avoid being particular.”

When the three left the Gardens, they adjourned to a restaurant, where they regaled themselves on chops and bottled beer.

“What shall we do to-night?” asked Carroll, when they had finished their repast.

“Go to a theatre or some place of amusement, I suppose,” said Mr. Mompas.

“Of course you'll come with us?” said Carroll, addressing Boyne.

“I am quite at your service,” replied Gerald.

"What shall it be, then? Let's look at the advertisements." Mr. Carroll took up a paper and began to read from it. "'Othello'—that won't do: too much ranting for a warm night. 'Midsummer Night's Dream.'"

"That will do," exclaimed Mr. Mompas.

"Stop a bit: not too fast," said Mr. Carroll. "Let us look at the cast first, my dreamy gentleman. Miss Lavinia Fitzgiggins, Miss Maud Vane, Miss Trixy Dale, Miss Elma Vernon, and a whole army of misses with diminutive Christian names and, I presume, good legs. Now, for the men: not one good actor amongst them, with the exception of Mr. Star, who plays *Bottom*. I can't stand Shakespeare with lay figures for actresses and only one good actor."

The others coincided with him.

"What have they at Nature's Looking-glass?" continued Mr. Carroll.

"'Lady of Lyons.'"

"I don't object to that," said Mr. Mompas.

"Then I do," replied Mr. Carroll. "It's too spoony. It may do very well for you, but it won't do for me. I'm not one of your sentimental fellows. Let's see what comedy

there is. Bah!—comedy is a dead letter. There's nothing but opéra bouffe and burlesque. There's nothing worth seeing; still we must see something. I vote we go to the Royal Malvenusa. We can't do worse."

After some discussion, this reputable place of resort was decided upon.

Mr. Carroll met some of his fellow-students there, and introduced them to his two friends. When this important ceremony was over, the whole party paid a visit to the nearest refreshment buffet: medical students, and, indeed, most Englishmen, are always thirsty when they meet their friends. Mr. Carroll was in such good spirits that he not only would insist on (to use his own expression) "paying the piper" for the whole of the company, but he also was so courteous as to "treat" several young ladies (unattended) who were standing near, and to one of these he administered a just rebuke. Upon his inquiring of her as to what beverage she would take, she replied that she would have champagne: whereupon Mr. Carroll informed her that, if she had, she would have to pay for it herself; but that, if she were not above brandy and soda water, she

could have that at his expense. The lady was not above brandy and soda.

Soon after our three friends had parted from the buffet, the students, and the very obliging young damsels, who would have been as ready to empty their pockets as they were their glasses, whom should Boyne behold, a few paces in front of them, attired in full evening costume—even to opera hat and light overcoat—but Mr. Crummerton.

“Look at that ugly little cad in the dress coat,” remarked Carroll. “He wants to make people believe that he’s been to a dinner-party.”

At this moment Mr. Crummerton’s eye caught sight of Boyne. He did not like Boyne, any more than Boyne liked him; and he would have avoided Gerald, but for vanity. Mr. Crummerton was desirous of showing our friend that, if he (Boyne) thought himself “a great swell,” he (Crummerton) in his dress suit was as great a swell; so he stuck both his hands into his trousers pockets, called a rollicking grin to his vulgar countenance, and swaggered up to Boyne.

“Whoever would have thought of finding

you here to-night, old cock?" said Mr. Crummerton, by way of greeting.

"Well, I am here, whether people thought of finding me here or not," answered Gerald, curtly. He was annoyed at Mr. Crummerton's familiarity.

"Yes, I see you are," said the little clerk, winking and indulging in a giggle, which made the bystanders imagine that he was digesting an excellent joke. "Very full to-night — warm, too. Come and have a liquor," said he, when he found that Boyne was disinclined to carry on a conversation with him.

"No, thank you," replied Gerald. "I have just had one. You must excuse me; my friends are waiting for me." He nodded to the little man, seized hold of the arms of Carroll and Mompas, and hurried away to another part of the house.

Mr. Crummerton gazed at their retreating forms, took one hand from his trousers pocket, pushed his opera hat from off his forehead, passed his fingers slowly across his brow, frowned, and then muttered, in a voice that sounded like a deep growl, "That's some more



of his d—d upstart pride! I ain't good enough for him, not even when I'm in dress togs. I'll be even with him some day."

The little clerk frowned again, shook his head in a menacing manner, clenched his fist, then turned on his heel, and walked in the direction of the refreshment bar.

"Whoever would have thought of that little cad being a friend of yours?" remarked Carroll.

"He's not a friend of mine," replied Boyne: "I abominate the fellow!"

"How is it that he greeted you so familiarly?"

"To annoy me, I should think. He's a clerk in the same office as I am."

"Then, there are greater cads in the city than there are in the medical profession," remarked Carroll.

"Or even in the Customs," added Mr. Mompas. "I've a great mind never to wear evening dress again. The sight of such a cad in it is enough to make one disgusted with it for ever!"

Our friends left the theatre before the close of the performance, and, much against Mr. Carroll's wish, took the nearest road to their

lodgings. Mompas and Boyne had great difficulty in preventing the medical student from leaving them, and from going after some of the pretty (but not too strictly virtuous) young damsels that were hovering about in the vicinity of Regent Street; in fact, they would not have been able to have kept him with them, but for the potent reason that his pockets were empty, and that they refused to lend him any money, and so forced him to be moral in spite of himself.

When they arrived at their lodgings, they found the oysters and stout ready for them.

"Now, then, boys," exclaimed Mr. Carroll, tossing his hat on the sofa, and flinging himself into a chair, "set to!"

He commenced to serve out the oysters himself, and requested Mr. Mompas to cut the bread-and-butter, and Boyne to pour out the stout.

"Now," said Carroll, taking a knife in one hand, and stretching out the other towards a plate with lemons on it, "I'll warrant you don't know how to eat oysters rightly, Boyne."

"I suppose you mean by that, that my way of eating them will not accord with yours?" replied Boyne, smiling.

"Exactly," answered the self-satisfied Mr. Carroll.

"I must say, Carroll, that you are blessed with an amazing quantity of self-conceit."

"No doubt you use vinegar and pepper?"

"Certainly," said Boyne.

"Quite wrong—radically wrong! A much finer flavour is produced by squeezing a few drops of lemon over the oysters." The epicurean cut a lemon in two, and gave an ocular demonstration of his theory. "Then," he continued, "no doubt you eat first an oyster and then a mouthful of bread-and-butter?"

"I suppose you do the same," said Boyne, laughing.

"Never, my friend, never," exclaimed Carroll, with mock gravity.

"Then you eat all your oysters first, and your bread-and-butter afterwards?"

"No," was the student's sententious reply.

"Then, like a child, you eat up your

bread-and-butter first, and save your oysters—the best part of your meal—until the last?”

“No, my friend, you are wrong again. I eat half-a-dozen oysters, and then some bread-and-butter; then another half-dozen of oysters, followed by more bread-and-butter. You can't get the full taste of oysters unless you eat them by the half-dozen without interruption. Now let us commence.”

The supper was soon despatched, and then our three friends settled down to their grog and pipes. They talked about the state of the drama and the scarcity of good actors. Mr. Mompas inveighed, in strong terms, against the depravity of the public taste and the shamelessness of theatrical managers. As the room was rather warmer than they liked, Mr. Carroll opened the door, and then popped his head outside and listened attentively. Presently he drew in his head, and held up his forefinger, as if to enjoin silence.

“Hush!” said he. “Bokes and his wife are at it again.”

Soon they distinguished the shrill voice of Mrs. Bokes.

"Bokes has come home groggy again," remarked Carroll, in a low whisper.

"My children are my only comforts," screamed Mrs. Bokes.

They heard Mr. Bokes hiccup out,—*"I'm another."*

"Fancy Bokes a comfort at any time," said the medical student, laughing softly. "With all his faults, his wife seems very fond of him. I suppose it's because she can rule him."

After a while, they heard Mr. Bokes exclaim, with drunken earnestness,—*"I won't be tre—treated so—by—by any wo—any woman, Anna Maria."*

"How does your tipsy highness want to be treated, then?" asked his spouse, indignantly.

"With ci—civility an' respec'," replied the drunken man, with great gravity.

"Civility an' respec'!" exclaimed his wife, with a contemptuous laugh. "Will it please your highness to give me the candle, and not let it wibble-wobble about in your tipsy fingers? Here, give it to me."

From the rattle which the snuffers or extinguisher made against the side of the tin candle-

stick, the lady must have snatched it from him without waiting to ascertain her lord and master's pleasure.

"What—what you call me 'ighness for?" presently inquired Mr. Bokes.

"Call you 'ighness!" replied the lady. "Why don't you pronounce your h's?" (She aspirated the "h's" very forcibly.) "What would decent folks say about me, if they heard you talk in that uneducated way? They'd call you Highness of Whitechapel. Get along to bed, will you!"

With these words, Mrs. Bokes gave her husband a push, which had the effect of causing him—after it had nearly brought him to the ground—to commence his slow and lumbering progress upstairs. When they neared the apartment in which our three friends were, Carroll drew in his head and softly closed the door, which he did not re-open until he heard the feet of the estimable couple clattering upon the floor of the landing above.

"Bokes must have another dose of ipecac., and be turned into the yard, to-morrow," remarked Carroll, with a wink and a smile.

The young men stayed up chatting and

smoking until the cold grey light of the dawn made its way through the Venetian blinds, and cast its unearthly rays over the room and its occupants; then they began to think about bed, and, after a few yawns all round, they shook hands, said "Good-night," and retired to their several couches.

## CHAPTER XI.

### MR. CARROLL IS DISAPPOINTED.

ON that Sunday, Boyne paid a visit to his friend, the old clerk, Mr. Josephs; Mompas disappeared at mid-day—no one knew whither; and Carroll remained at his lodgings until about five in the afternoon, when he repaired to the house of his fellow-student, Mr. Newton. He found that gentleman at home, and was invited by him to join the family at dessert. Mr. Carroll accepted the invitation, was introduced to his friend's father, mother, and sisters, and made himself so agreeable that they all declared—after he and Newton had departed, to keep their appointment with the two little dressmakers—that, although he smelt frightfully strong of tobacco-smoke, he was a “very nice young fellow.”



When they arrived at the place of assignation, they found but one young lady there, and that one was Newton's fair friend.

"Where's Jenny?" inquired Carroll, as soon as he had greeted the young girl.

"Married," replied Milly.

Both the young men stared at her with astonishment. Mr. Carroll was the first to speak.

"Married!" exclaimed he, repeating the word the girl had uttered.

"Yes, married; and I was her bridesmaid."

Mr. Carroll gave a low whistle.

"You know the night we went to the theatre with you?" said Milly.

"Well?" answered Carroll, impatiently.

"Well," continued Milly, "after you had left us that night, who should, all of a sudden, come close up by Jenny's side but Mr. Jennings—that's her lover. He'd found out about her going to the theatre with you. They quarrelled, and he went off in a huff. I had such a fuss with Jenny that night. She did nothing but cry and lament the moment she ever saw your face. You may think how surprised I was, when the next night she came

home at a much later hour than usual—I wondered whatever had become of her, and was half afraid that she had made away with herself—threw herself into my arms, and amidst tears of joy told me that Jack had met her just as she was leaving her business place, that they had made friends again, that he had introduced her to his uncle, that the uncle was going to have Jack as manager of his shop, and that they were going to be married as soon as possible. I myself saw them married by licence; and now they both live at Mr. Jennings's uncle's, and they both said they'd only be too glad to see me whenever I liked to visit them."

Mr. Carroll whistled a second time at the conclusion of Milly's relation of the above. He decidedly looked rather crest-fallen at the loss of his innamorata.

"You're done out of your walks with Miss Jenny, then!" exclaimed Newton, laughing.

"Yes," replied Carroll, with a slight sigh; "but, perhaps, it's all the better for her that Mr. What's-his-name has made her a Mrs."

"Perhaps it is," remarked Newton, with a knowing wink.

"Well, I won't make one in the way. If the inconstant one has spoilt my pleasure, that is no reason why I should be so malicious as to spoil yours by favouring you with my company, which I know to be at the present time most unwelcome."

"Not at all," said Newton, in such a tone as to imply that it was most unwelcome.

"Good night, old fellow! good night, Miss Milly!" said Carroll, turning and leaving the pair.

"H'm!" soliloquized he. "I'm glad the little baggage is so well off. My acquaintance—although my intentions were most harmless—may have terminated injuriously to the girl's welfare. That Milly is a pretty little thing. I hope Newton won't lead her astray. He can't be trusted with a pretty girl. I think some kind friend ought to speak to her: I've a great mind to speak to her myself. Bah! I'm growing too moral by half—just because the other one has given me the slip. If she had not, I should probably have been as bad as Newton—maybe! The girl must take care of herself, like all the rest of the world; still I shouldn't like her to go to the bad."

Our friend marched to the nearest public-house, and there drowned his disappointment in cold brandy-and-water. To the great astonishment of Mr. Mompas, he heard that Carroll was snug in bed before he (Mompas) had arrived home.

## CHAPTER XII.

## MR. CRUMMERTON'S OPINION OF OUR HERO.

"I was at the 'Malvenusa' on Saturday," said Mr. Crummerton to his friend Bill, as they were sitting together, in the office, on the Monday morning.

"I went to the 'Flariana' with Sam Topple," replied Bill. "We had a jolly lark! Got three sheets in the wind!"

"Who d'ye think I saw at the 'Mal.'?"

"Don't know!"

"Guess."

"Man or woman?" inquired Bill.

"Man," replied Crummerton.

"Had you the misfortune to meet Bill Gooch, who lent you the five quid which you never intend to pay?"

"No: try again."

"Or the tailor who threatens to sharpen your memory by means of a lawyer's letter?"

"No."

"Your revered paternal?"

"No."

"Your brother-in-law, squiring a light damsel about?"

"No," said Mr. Crummerton, with a sad smile. "No such luck. I wish I had. Wouldn't I borrow of him, then!"

"Well, I can't guess!" exclaimed Bill, in despair.

"No," said Crummerton, "I didn't suppose you could. You'd never guess that I should meet such a very moral-looking bloke of a swell as Mr."—he uttered the "Mister" in a very nasty manner—"Boyne there."

"I don't think I should," remarked Bill.

"Of course you wouldn't," replied Mr. Crummerton. "But I did, though; and, what's more, I spoke to him."

"What did you say to him?" asked Bill.

"Why, I asked him to have a liquor-up," answered Crummerton.

This was a favourite phrase of the little clerk's,

"And would he?"

"No; he refused my civility."

"He's a proud, stuck-up fellow."

"You're right there. He made a couple of friends the excuse to cut off from me."

"Did he, though?"

"And they were a couple, too."

"Fast cards?"

"Rather so. I think Maynard ought to know what company that young gentleman keeps, and what places he frequents. I shouldn't be surprised to see Mr. Boyne turn up at the Old Bailey, for forgery or embezzlement, or something of that sort, one of these days."

"Those proud cards that hold their heads so much higher than other people's often get their noses brought to the grindstone," remarked Bill, quietly.

"I certainly should like to see him brought down a peg or two. I certainly should like to see the fine peacock shorn of his cock's-comb and docked of his tail," grunted the ugly little malignant.

"What did you do with yourself yesterday?" asked his companion. "I expected you in."

"Yes," answered Crummerton, "I in-

tended to give you a look-up; but Bob Fogle dropped in early in the morning, and lugged me out of bed, and then dragged me to Richmond and back on the top of a 'bus. Jolly day! we had plenty of weeds, and a big flask of brandy in each of our side-pockets."

"Then you must have enjoyed yourselves," said Bill.

"We did, sir, tru—ly," replied Mr. Crummerton, placing his left forefinger by the side of his nose, and winking at his friend.

"Come!" exclaimed Mr. Josephs, "hadn't you two gentlemen better do a little more work and a little less talking?"

"Hold your tongue, you stupid old ass!" muttered Mr. Crummerton, in much too low a tone for Mr. Josephs to hear. The two worthies turned their attention to their account-books.



## CHAPTER XIII.

## FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES, AND THEIR REMEDIES.

"WHATEVER makes you look so glum, old fellow?" inquired Carroll, of Boyne, as he entered Gerald's room one evening.

"Why, to tell you the truth," replied Boyne, with something like a blush rising to his cheeks, "I find my finances don't hold out as well as they ought."

"That's enough to make one glum. Let's see if we can't devise some way of lowering the expenditure and replenishing the exchequer."

Old habits are not easily dropped, and Gerald found it a rather difficult matter to relinquish all his old extravagances at once. Notwithstanding his endeavours to live as frugally as possible, some of his former habits were continually obtruding themselves. If he

thought that he should be late at his office, he at once, without counting the cost, hailed a cab, when a twopenny 'bus would have served his purpose just as well; and sometimes he indulged in heavier dinners than his friend Mr. Josephs would have approved of; so that, almost before he was aware of it, he was on the brink of overrunning the constable.

"Are you in debt?" asks Carroll.

"No; but I soon shall be, if I don't both retrench and raise the wind."

"Lucky fellow, not to be in debt! That simplifies the matter greatly."

"How so?"

"Why, for one thing, you won't have to borrow from fresh people to pay off your old debts. Now, I fancy you're rather extravagant with your washing. Couldn't you manage to cut the washing-bill down?"

"I don't see how I can," answered Boyne, after a pause.

"Well, we'll try and see together," replied Carroll. "How many shirts do you wear a week?"

"I usually put on one a day."

Mr. Carroll gave a prolonged whistle.

"One a day!" exclaimed he. "Why, man, you're as extravagant as a Grand Bashaw or an emperor. No wonder you find yourself getting into a state of bankruptcy. Seven fours are twenty-eight. There goes two-and-fourpence a week for shirts alone. And I suppose you have collars and socks to match. Ruination, my dear sir! You must get rid of such magnificent and luxurious habits, and the sooner you do so the better. Adopt my plan—two clean shirts a week, and three or four clean collars. My linen never looks particularly dirty, does it?"

"No."

"Then you have a host of clothes that you never wear. Why not sell some? It's true you won't get a third of their value; but that is better than clothes that will be old-fashioned before they are worn out."

"I'll do as you advise, then," said Boyne. "Where shall I sell them?"

"There's an 'old clo' on the opposite side of the street," answered Carroll. "The very man we want," exclaimed he, rushing to the window, and beckoning to a shabby-genteel, Israelitish individual, who grasped with the

grimy, ringed fingers of his left hand the twisted mouth of a large rusty-black bag which hung over his shoulder.

The man touched his hat, and hastened across to the door.

"I haven't given that fellow a job for a long time," continued the medical student. "He annoyed me so much some time ago that I threatened never to deal with him again. He used to stand in front of this house for half an hour at a time, and smile and bow whenever I looked out of the window. It was no good to tell him that you had not a bundle of old clothes to sell every day, and that it was useless for him to perch himself there and grin like a chimpanzee. He did not take the least notice of various hints and warnings that his presence was objectionable; and, at last, Moses made me so wild that I went out and gave him a salutary kicking for his impertinence. I thought afterwards that he might have summoned me for it. He did not, though. I suppose I was too good a customer to offend in that way. Here he is, at the door. You may as well have him as any other. One swindles you about as much as another."

He went to the door, and let in the old clothesman. Gerald was not long in depositing his superfluous garments in a heap at the Jew's feet. How the man's eyes gloated over them! How minutely he examined each, running his sharp eyes over the stitching, feeling the cloth, and turning each inside out.

"You may as well keep back one dress suit," remarked Carroll.

"No; let them all go," replied Boyne.

"As you like; but I should advise you to keep one back."

"No."

Carroll did all the bartering with the man. He haggled fiercely with him, and made him raise the price first five shillings, then shilling by shilling, sixpence by sixpence, and at last penny by penny, until he knew that the man would bid no higher.

"I don't think you can do better than accept Mr. Moses's very magnificent offer," said Carroll to Boyne. He added, in a whisper,— "I know I've driven the rogue as high as he'll go."

"I shouldn't like to offer anybody so much,

sir, only this gentleman's one of my old patrons," exclaimed the Jew.

"Or, rather, this gentleman is almost as good a Jew as yourself, and won't be taken in by you," remarked Mr. Carroll.

A peculiar smile played for a moment about the Israelite's lips. He laughed in his sleeve at the young Christian's conceit, when he (the Jew) had the best of the bargain by a hundred per cent. or more.

"I agree," said Boyne.

The Jew paid the money, and put the clothes into his bag.

"Now," said Carroll, emphatically, "Mr. Moses, or Ishmael, or whatever your name is, because I have given you another turn, you need not show your gratitude by loitering every day in front of this house. If you do, I'll administer another kicking, or have you summoned under the Nuisance Act."

"I don't want no more o' yer kickings, sir," said the man. "Your kicking is too hard. It's as hard as yer bargains, and ye can't get nothin' out o' them."

A chuckling sound was emitted from the old clo'man's throat.

“Good-day,” said Carroll.

“Good-day to you, gen'l'men,” replied the old clo'man, with a profound bow ; and when his body had recovered its erect position after the performance of this ceremony, he slung his well-filled bag over his shoulder and departed.

This brings us up to the date of the scene related at the commencement of our narrative.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### GERALD MAKES A NEW ACQUAINTANCE.

A FEW mornings after the day on which Mr. Crummerton had so willingly undertaken the business which Gerald had considered beneath his dignity, Mr. Josephs was in his employer's private room.

"How do you like young Boyne, Josephs?" asked Maynard.

"He does his work well enough," answered the cautious old clerk.

"Do you know what society he keeps?" was the merchant's second inquiry.

"He keeps a good deal of mine," answered Mr. Josephs.

"If all his associates are like yourself," said Maynard, laughing, "he can't be impeached for unsteadiness."



"His only other associates are his fellow-lodgers—a medical student and a Custom-House clerk."

"H'm!" remarked Maynard,— "medical students have the reputation of being rather fast!"

"I believe Mr. Crummerton made him an offer of his friendship; but he gratefully declined it," said Josephs, drily.

"I don't blame the youngster for that," replied Maynard, heartily.

"No," said the old clerk. "I fancy Mr. Crummerton's company would be more shaky than even a medical student's or a Custom-House clerk's."

Mr. Josephs soon after retired to his own desk in the outer office.

"Dear me," said Maynard to himself, "it must be lonely for Boyne. I've a great mind to ask him up to my place now and then. I don't see why I should not: he's a gentleman!"

Before the time for office-closing had arrived, Mr. Maynard had come to the conclusion that there was no reason why he should not invite his clerk, Gerald Boyne, up to his house to

dinner on the following evening, and he had also determined that he would do so.

He rang his office-bell; Mr. Crummerton, with a most obsequious smile on his countenance, and with his pen behind his ear, answered it.

"Ask Mr. Boyne to come here for a minute!" exclaimed Maynard, sharply, as he was putting away his papers.

"Oh, Gemine! He's in for it hot!" muttered the little clerk. He went up to Boyne, and put his hand on his shoulder. "Here, I say," said he, "the gov. wants you—sharp. He's in a devil of a way about something! I'm glad I'm not in for it; I hope you ain't."

The little rascal most devoutly hoped that he was. Boyne felt rather a sinking at the heart when he appeared before his employer.

"What are you going to do to-morrow evening?" asked that gentleman, with a bland smile, which greatly surprised Gerald after the information he had received from Mr. Crummerton.

"I have no particular engagement for to-morrow evening at present," answered Boyne.

"Will you dine with me to-morrow?"

Boyne hesitated a moment before he answered. He regretted now that he had not taken Carroll's advice and kept one dress suit from the greedy clutch of the shrewd Jew clo'man. He was puzzled as to where he could borrow one; for he knew that Mr. Carroll's had passed up the "spout" into one of his (town) uncle's dingy store-rooms, and that the government clerk's—if the members of the other departments of the civil service will permit a man in the Customs to be so designated—would not fit him. His mind was relieved by Maynard's saying that there would be no need of dress, as it would only be a quiet family dinner. Upon hearing this, Gerald accepted his invitation.

"Mind and be ready by five o'clock to-morrow, then," said Maynard.

The next evening, exactly as the clock struck five, Maynard emerged from behind the door of his private room into the outer office. The instant Gerald saw him, he seized his hat and followed him into the street.

"We must make haste, or we shall not be in time for the train," said the merchant.

A few minutes' fast walking brought them to the station.

"Hold this bag a moment. I'll get your ticket for you: you won't know which place to go for it," said the merchant, giving his bag to Boyne and running off as briskly as a young man.

In less than a couple of minutes he returned with the railway-ticket in his hand, and in a couple more they were seated comfortably in the train, and were being whirled rapidly along in the direction of the station nearest to Maynard's house.

"We get out here," said Maynard, as the train stopped at a suburban station.

After a short walk, they reached the city merchant's house. It was a large, old-fashioned mansion, situated in the midst of—for a house so near London—spacious grounds, which were surrounded by a high brick wall.

"Is your mistress in the dining-room?" asked Maynard of the footman, as they were standing in the hall.

The man replied in the affirmative.

Gerald thought it strange that he had never heard any of the clerks—not even old Mr. Josephs—mention that their employer was a married man.

They proceeded to the dining-room; there was no lady in it.

"H'm!" said the master of the house, "she isn't here. The man made a mistake."

Gerald took a glance at the room. It was a large room with a bow-window, which looked on to a well-kept lawn, at one end; while, in a recess, at the other, stood a splendid cabinet filled with valuable works of art. The furniture was of stained oak; the paper, chocolate-coloured. Pictures of nature in a passion, storms on land and on sea, hung on the walls. On the centre of the mantel-shelf was a beautiful ormolu clock, with a fine antique vase filled with choice flowers on each side of it. There were flowers on a table near the window, and also flowers on the centre of the dining-table. These flowers somewhat relieved the room of its sombre character.

On the wall, opposite the fireplace, was the picture of the husband of Francesca di Rimini discovering the guilty lovers; the man stood in a listening attitude; the expression on his face was horrible—he seemed the very personification of jealousy and revenge. It was

an awful contrast to the joyous faces of the two lovers.

"What a horrible picture!" exclaimed Gerald. "I should not have thought that would have been at all to your taste. You are always so lively and so gay."

"I may like it to serve as a contrast to myself," replied the merchant, smiling. "I may have the vanity to think that horrors like these around only make my own brightness shine the greater. If some people did not appreciate art of that kind, the artist would starve. As long as Spagnolettos exhibit great artistic skill they must not be allowed to die because the subjects they select are repugnant to squeamish, orthodox, commonplace people, who shudder alike at ideal tragedy and ideal comedy, call the one horrid, and the other 'horrid' low, and tolerate only conventional pictures of manners, to which tame exhibitions they apply the term 'natural.' But you've been deceived by the fair sex. Did your face never resemble that man's?"

"I scarcely felt that blow at all," replied Gerald.

"That's strange!" exclaimed Maynard.

“Most men, especially young men, wince a good deal under wounds of that sort. You can’t be a hard-hearted man, or else Cupid’s dart would have left a deeper and a slower-healing stab ; when hearts of iron reveal a soft place, it is a very soft one. You are a light-hearted young man, or fickle ; or else love’s fire would not have left your feathers so unsinged. When will men be wise enough to see that, as a general rule, women marry them for the position they occupy, or the money they have, but not for love ? A rich banker’s daughter sets her heart on being connected with the old aristocracy, and a poor noble’s daughter upon getting a wealthy fool who will allow her to bully him, hoodwink him, and spend his money *ad libitum* ; and they never pretend to show their husbands any affection, unless they want some whim satisfied or some heavy dressmaker’s bill paid. What little heart there is left in them is bestowed on lovers as worthless as themselves. If husbands discover such connexions, and object to them, or if the lovers elope, scandals are raised, and the female portion of society expels the immoral offenders of its own sex, and showers such homage on

their paramours—whilst they playfully call them naughty men—that one would think that the whole of the respectable female world, with the exception of school-girls of fourteen and dowagers of seventy, had set its heart upon being seduced by fascinating scoundrels. Women may just as well be sold as in Eastern countries, for here they only sell themselves to the highest bidders. Love, truth, honesty, and honour do exist in most young girls, and in those women who consider them to be virtues; but two-thirds of the sex act as if they believed them to be vices.” No doubt, all fair and false ladies, who read Mr. Maynard’s strictures, will mistake their honest next-door neighbours for themselves.”

“You are what a lady would term, ‘very severe,’” said Gerald, smiling.

“I own that I exaggerate,” said the merchant; “but I have met with such a number of bad women, that I should not be human if I had a different opinion of the sex in general.”

“Met with such a number of bad women!”

“You’ll say that speaks bad for my younger days. But many of the so-called bad women



have much more heart than their respectable sisters, whose respectability is but maintained by their utter want of the good qualities that usually belong to that organ. I discovered the frailty of one most respectable matron a few days ago. I had to meet a friend at one of the hotels in the city. As I was ascending the stairs, who should be coming down but a pet dignitary of a country cathedral with the wife of an old acquaintance of mine upon his arm. The reverend clerk, who was not in clerical attire, nodded, and gave me a hurried 'How d'ye do?' and the lady bowed and looked flurried. My suspicions were aroused. I asked a waiter who they were, alleging that I knew them, but for the moment could not remember their names. He replied that they were a Mr. and Mrs. —, from Buckinghamshire, that they had been staying there for three nights, and that they were frequently in town for a few days. I could raise a fine divorce case out of the affair, if I chose to, only I don't respect any of the parties enough to do so. The priest (he's a High Church clergyman, who practises celibacy) is a rogue, the husband a fool, and the woman is—fond

of the embraces of any man but her own husband. If ever you get married, never make a bosom friend of a young and good-looking bachelor, for he is sure to rob you of your wife."

Gerald declared that, at the present time, he had no intention whatever of getting married; but that, if ever he did get married, he would remember his friend's advice. He conjectured that the merchant's married life could not have been a happy one.

"The faults of women, I think," continued Maynard, "are due to her parasitic dependence on man. While she can get man to keep her, she will never even attempt to keep herself. From her love of being kept, some people would give her an unpleasant name; but, knowing that all humanity shifts for itself as well as it can, I am disposed to be lenient to her." Gerald thought that, if he were not more lenient to his clerks than he was to women, most of them would soon find another master. "Men are as bad as women," said the merchant.

"Then," said Gerald, interrupting him, "you admit that there is not much to choose between the two sexes?"

"Yes," replied the merchant, laughing; "humanity is like a plum-pudding, with good (when well cleansed) figs here and there, and a lot of abominable dough, capable of producing any amount of pain and suffering, in between them. Every individual works for himself, and cares nought for the rest. There is no *esprit de corps* in humanity, generally speaking. But I must not go on at this rate, or else you will think I am a dismal philosopher when I am just the reverse. I may be cynical, but I am generally merry. I've seen too many tricks played by men and by women to believe much in the 'soul' which is supposed to inhabit either. Only the other day, a handsome rascal tried to inveigle the daughter of a person, whom I know, into a marriage with him. Luckily, a suspicious friend of the father poked about and made inquiries about the would-be husband, and discovered, just in time, that he was a married man with a family of six. I don't like these amateur detectives, as a rule; they are generally sneaks; but, certainly, in this case, the fellow did good service."

The jocular tone in which Mr. Maynard

uttered his cynical remarks almost made Gerald think that he did not believe in his own cynicism; but when, a few moments after, he saw the merchant looking steadfastly at the painting on the opposite wall, to his great surprise, he observed that his face assumed much the same expression as the deceived husband's on the canvas,—he was certain that the man had undergone some great trial, and that his smiling cynicism was real and terrible. Maynard apparently noticed the look of astonishment in Gerald's eye, for he walked to a small table near the window, turned his back on his guest, and took up a book.

Presently the door opened, and a lady entered. Mr. Maynard turned round with his usual good-tempered smile upon his face, and advanced to meet her.

Boyne thought that she was a very young wife for a man of Maynard's age.

"My dear," said the merchant, "you have kept us rather a long time waiting for you. Allow me to introduce my daughter to you, Boyne. Miss Maynard—Mr. Boyne."

The lady and gentleman bowed to each other.

"I hope that you have provided something good for dinner. I told you that I intended to bring a friend home with me."

"Wait and see," answered the young lady, smiling.

"Now you have honoured us with your company, we may as well have dinner at once," said the merchant, ringing the bell.

Both Gerald and Miss Maynard were at this time occupied in mentally criticizing each other's appearance. We will attempt to describe the impression that Miss Maynard made on Boyne. At the first glance he thought that there was nothing very striking about her. She was something like her father in features, but she was much paler. Her eyes were large and blue, and she had a quantity of golden hair. He was of opinion that she looked rather cold and classical, without quite beauty enough to carry such repulsive qualities off. Soon he began to think that this coldness was due to the natural pallor of her complexion (and that was not her fault); for the frank, kindly rays that beamed from those blue eyes, and the good-tempered smile of welcome that caused her mouth to appear enchanting, were

gradually making him confess (to himself), that if the young lady had not the most beautiful face in the world, yet she possessed one of the most pleasant and lovable ones that he had ever seen. Since that early misfortune of his, Gerald had kept aloof from women's society. He had rarely thought of them, and, when he did, he was sure to associate his remembrances of the false one with the whole sex. But, somehow, he could not prevent that face and those eyes from making a thrust at his heart; they were so full of truth and honesty. Her blue eyes seemed filled with feeling and humour. Her figure was elegant, and her hands were white and well formed.

"Now we'll sit down," said Maynard, as the servant placed the soup upon the table. After the man had handed round the plates, he retired.

"I hate servants to hear every word I say," remarked Maynard; "so I never have them in the room more than I can help. I don't like everything that is said to be retailed to their fellows in the kitchen, with numerous additions and alterations. What have you been doing with yourself all the day?" asked he of his daughter.

"I did a little painting and singing in the morning, and about one o'clock Mrs. Molyneux called."

"What had she to say for herself?"

"She gave a long account of a dinner-party that she was at yesterday evening. Told me how she was charmed with some ladies, and jealous of the attention paid to others. She made the acquaintance of some artists and authors, and extorted promises of photographs from them. Of course, she gave me a minute description of her toilette. She was greatly delighted, because she thought that she had made her husband jealous, and complained most grievously of her husband's flirtations."

"She's a pretty little fool," remarked the merchant.

"Hush!" said his daughter, reprovingly.

"Well, would you like to be such a woman as she is?"

"No, certainly not."

"Mrs. Molyneux is a product of fashionable life—vain, frivolous, and chattering, and most ill-natured when any of her whims are thwarted. She hunts up all celebrities, and is extremely desirous of associating with people

whose social standing is one step above her own. Having no intellect, she judges of people by their reputation, their wealth, and consequence in the world of fashion."

"You are a good deal too hard upon her, papa."

"No, I am not, Alice."

The fish was brought in.

"Salmon!" said Maynard, when the cover was removed.

"I thought you would both like that," replied his daughter.

"Well, I do. Do you, Boyne?" inquired the merchant of his guest.

"Very much," replied Boyne.

"Do you know, papa," said Miss Maynard, "that a gentleman called to-day, and wanted to see you?"

"Well."

"When he heard that you were not at home, he requested to see the mistress of the house, so they showed him in to me. He was a well-dressed young man, and, from the superb bow which he made me, I quite expected to find that he was some very distinguished individual. Imagine my astonishment when he, after



apologizing for his intrusion, opened a small leathern bag, which he carried in his hand, took some gas-burners therefrom, and requested my patronage. My saying that I knew nothing about gas-burners drew from him a long lecture on the simplest form of gas-burner, and afterwards on the differences of structure in the numerous improved gas-burners; he descanted most eloquently upon the superior merits of his own particular patent. The man continued talking for such a long time that at last I was obliged to buy a dozen, to get rid of him. I took good care to tell the servants never to admit any gentlemen with little bags again."

"This touting for orders is decidedly the most annoying form of advertising," said Maynard.

"I shall always be afraid to see a stranger now, in case he turns out to be a tout," exclaimed his daughter.

"Touting seems quite the order of the day, both in commercial and social life," remarked Maynard. "The merchant touts his goods; the mother her daughters: competition is the parent of the evil in both cases. Trade-morality and social morality are both shaky.

Moralizing will not alter matters, though. One may prate for ever about the wickedness of the world; but cheats of all kinds will live and prosper all the same."

After dessert Miss Maynard left the two men alone.

"You are pretty well up in our city ways now, are you not?" said the merchant.

"Yes, thanks to the kindness of Mr. Josephs," replied Boyne.

"He's a capital coach in all business matters," remarked Maynard. "I only wish that I had been lucky enough to meet with such a man when I first entered the city. He would have saved me a host of trouble. Josephs is invaluable to me. I don't know what I should do without Josephs. You were rather surprised at my sharp practice the other day?" observed the merchant.

"Never more surprised in my life," replied Boyne.

The merchant smiled.

"You are the last man in the world that I should have thought would have been—" Boyne hesitated.

"Go on," exclaimed Maynard, laughing. "Out with it; guilty, you would have said."

"Well, I was going to say guilty," said Gerald.

"Yes, I have no doubt that you were astonished to find a frank, good-tempered fellow like myself up to such tricks. That firm played me the same trick a short time ago, and I was determined to pay them back in their own coin. It will be a lesson to them not to attempt to take me in again. When people are honest to me, I give them honesty in return; but I always think it my duty to stop any underhand dodges. Mr. Crummerton was not so fastidious as you: he did not refuse to do my dirty work."

"No," said Boyne, smiling. "I think he was rather elated at having been chosen by you to do it."

"He is not over-scrupulous."

In the course of conversation, Maynard related to Boyne some particulars of his early history. He had inherited from his parents a considerable fortune, the greater part of which, in a few years after the attainment of his majority, passed into the hands of the rapacious

harpies, male and female, who are ever on the track of inexperienced youth with well-filled pockets. At last some kind friend, rather late in the day certainly—kind friends always interfere when people are upon the brink of ruin—they are always afraid to do so before—asked him if he did not think he was living too fast. Being in a more sober frame of mind than was usual with him, this person's remonstrances determined Maynard to make a thorough examination into the state of his affairs. He did so forthwith, and to his amazement discovered that but a very few thousands remained to him of the ample fortune which his parents had bequeathed to him. The interest on this money would not be enough to keep him as he would like to live; and, if he lived on the principal, he would soon be a beggar. It was evident to him that he must do something for his bread. After some consideration, he determined on commerce, and with this view articulated himself to a city merchant. He soon found that, although he had paid to learn business, he would have to teach himself, for the merchant with whom he was never put himself out of the way in the

slightest degree to instruct him. As he was a man of intelligence, he was not long in mastering such a knowledge of business that many city men do not acquire in their whole lives. By-and-by the merchant got into difficulties, to stem which he offered Maynard a partnership, provided he could bring a certain sum of money with him into the concern. As Maynard saw that the old man's embarrassment arose solely from mismanagement, and that there was not only a fair prospect of all coming right again under judicious rule, but even of the business attaining a greater prosperity than it ever had before, he accepted the merchant's offer, and invested the required sum in it. His conjectures proved right; for he not only soon got affairs straight, but also had the gratification of seeing the business prosper beyond his fondest hopes. Upon the death of his old partner he succeeded to his share, and thus became sole and responsible head of the establishment in which Boyne was a clerk.

"Now I shall take my usual after-dinner nap," said Maynard. "If you like to smoke, you can. There are plenty of cigars in that cabinet there." He pointed to a small, richly

ornamented cabinet which rested upon a side-table.

"Thank you, I should," replied Gerald.

"Help yourself, then," said Maynard.

Gerald went to the cabinet and opened it. As Maynard said, there were plenty of cigars there—the best Havannahs, too. He selected one, and proceeded to light it. By this time his employer, who had deposited his body in a comfortable arm-chair, and rested his legs on another, had thrown his handkerchief over his face, and was endeavouring to go off into a "snooze."

"If I don't wake-up by the time you have done your cigar, you can join my daughter in the drawing-room—next room to this," said Mr. Maynard from behind his handkerchief.

Gerald thanked him. In a few minutes more the merchant was sound asleep, and Boyne was pulling away lustily at his cigar, and thinking deeply about his financial affairs.

The merchant did not awake by the time Boyne had finished smoking, and, as he continued to sleep for some time longer, our young friend left his society for his daughter's.

He knocked at the door of the drawing-room.

"Come in," said Miss Maynard.

Boyne entered the room.

"I hope I do not disturb you?" said Gerald, apologetically.

"Not at all," answered the young lady.

The change from the dining-room to the drawing-room was like leaving a magnificent purgatory to enter a brilliant paradise. All was bright in the latter apartment. Its walls were hung with beautiful water-colour landscapes, sketches of placid corn-fields, of bits of sea-coast scenery, old and picturesque-looking houses, and of quiet country nooks, with rippling streams and thickly leaved trees. The furniture was light and elegant, and there was a fine piano in the room.

The brightness of the room, and the radiance of Miss Maynard, had a cheering effect upon Gerald. She was sitting in an easy chair, and had been reading a book which she held carelessly in her hand. When he entered the room, she placed the volume upon a table near her.

"Mr. Maynard told me to go to the drawing-room," said Gerald. He did not confess that he had been smoking.

"You are not the less welcome because he has dismissed you," replied the young lady, smiling. "I suppose he is asleep?"

"Yes. I am afraid that I have interrupted your reading."

"No; I only took up the book for a short time."

"May I inquire the name of it?"

"A volume of Browning," answered the young lady. "I was reading"—she blushed slightly—" 'The Blot on the 'Scutcheon.' "

"An old favourite of mine. What a beautifully drawn character Mildred is! How sweet is her love, her innocence, her sadness!"

"What a picture of love, honour, and manliness Mertoun is!" said Miss Maynard.

"And the song Mertoun sings outside Mildred's window!"

"Beautiful! What woman would not give anything to hear a lover offer her such pretty flattery?"

"I should like to see it acted," said Gerald.

"It has been acted," observed Miss Maynard.

"Yes; but it was a failure."

"How could such a splendid play fail?"



"For the simple reason," replied Gerald, smiling, "that the most popular actor of the time impersonated Mertoun, and was killed in the second act. Now a British audience does not like the best actor to die in the middle of a play, for it cares more for its favourite actor than it does for the play; and it expresses its discontent pretty strongly, if he is not in front of the foot-lights nearly the whole of the time, from the opening scene to the fall of the green-baize curtain."

"What a great difficulty any manager would have in procuring a competent Milledred!"

"Or even an intelligent one. Youth, beauty, and talent are rarely found in the same actress; so a manager would most probably have to content himself with an experienced lady that looked too old for the part, or a young, handsome girl that made it ridiculous by absurd displays of affectation and staginess, an ear-splitting, whining voice, and a continual ogling at the occupants of the boxes."

"One of the ordinary *jeunes premières*?"

"Exactly."

"How horrid that would be!" exclaimed the young lady, shuddering.

"Yes, but if one could only get over one's disgust at such a performance, it would prove a most amusing burlesque."

"What a frightful thing, 'Mildred' burlesqued!"

"Most probably it would be, if it were brought on the London stage at the present time, for I doubt whether there is any actress at any theatre in the capital capable of performing the part satisfactorily, although, I have no doubt, they all of them, except a few old dowagers, think that they would be perfection in it."

After conversing for some time on the state of the British drama, and its decline and fall, from the glorious productions of the Elizabethan period to teacup-and-saucer comedy, cut-throat melo-drama, and jingling burlesque, they passed on to music, and there also found a congenial theme. Their ideas coincided so well on most subjects that, by the time they parted that evening, they were quite old friends.

"Who is Mr. Boyne?" asked Miss Maynard of her father, after Gerald had departed.

"My clerk."

"Your clerk!" exclaimed the young lady, in surprise.

"You are rather astonished at my inviting one of my clerks to my house?" replied Maynard.

"Yes."

"I should not have done so, had he not been a gentleman as well as a clerk."

"But he's so well educated and clever!"

"That you can't believe he's a clerk," said her father, smiling.

"No," replied Alice.

"Truth, I assure you."

"He's so totally different from what one would imagine a clerk to be."

"Sudden misfortunes often turn men into paths of life which they would not take from choice."

"Has he been unfortunate, then?" inquired the young lady.

"So unfortunate as to lose a fortune."

"Do tell me all about it."

"You seem very eager, miss," said the merchant, smiling. "I think I had better not ask Mr. Boyne here too often, or I may be putting him in the right road to gain a fortune."

“Don’t talk such nonsense!” exclaimed the young lady, with a pout; then, after being silent for a moment or two, she added, “Do tell me!”

“I take an interest in the young man,” said Mr. Maynard, slowly and quietly, “and I certainly, if I find he continues to deserve it, shall do all in my power to help him on. But you want me to tell you something about him. He was the pet nephew of a rich uncle; and, until the young man was fool enough to fall in love with a heartless and mercenary coquette, never an ill word had passed between them. The old man did all he could to make his nephew give the woman up; he showed him her sordidness and her baseness, but the infatuated young idiot would not be convinced. The two quarrelled, and parted in anger. The old man sent for his lawyer, and altered his will in favour of his other relations, cut off his nephew with a shilling, and, before the day was spent, died in a fit; so Boyne was left with the whole world before him, and with scarcely a penny to help himself.”

“What a wicked old man his uncle must have been!” remarked Miss Maynard.

“For not wishing his fortune to be wasted on a worthless woman?” said her father.

“No; for disinheriting his nephew.”

“If he had lived long enough, he would probably have altered his will again. He most likely expected that, when the woman found his nephew penniless, she would break off her engagement with him (as, indeed, she did, directly the contents of the will became known to her); then, he could have reinstated him in his former place.”

“What became of the woman?”

“I believe she married a rich old *roué*.”

“How I hate such women!” exclaimed the young lady, with energy. “They are not fit to live.”

“You do? Then you’re my own dear girl.” The merchant put his arm around his daughter’s waist and kissed her tenderly.

Miss Maynard was rather startled at the emotional voice in which her father uttered these words.

Boyne soon became a frequent visitor at the house of his employer. Mr. Maynard liked him, and, as he stated above, took an interest in him, and his daughter, in a short time, more

than liked him, and began to take a very great interest in him. This feeling, upon the part of these two young people, was reciprocal; but Gerald struggled hard to keep it within the limits of mere friendship, for he was well aware that, owing to the difference in their positions, indulgence in the stronger and more delightful emotion called love would, in all likelihood, but bring misery upon them both. At every meeting the feeble barriers of cold friendship were in imminent danger of being burst through by the twain, who, in spite of the reserve and coyness on the part of the woman and the determination of the man to stifle such symptoms of the tender passion as might arise, were fast becoming dearer to each other than a prudent father or manœuvring mother would have relished, had they stood in that relation to the young lady. Gerald acted most unwisely—lovers generally do; for, instead of keeping away from the young lady, he eagerly embraced every opportunity of meeting her that was offered to him.

## CHAPTER XV.

## THE STORY OF THE PORTRAIT.

"THAT'S a very fine portrait!" remarked Gerald to Mr. Josephs, pointing with his pipe-stem towards the painting of the handsome lady that hung upon the wall of that gentleman's apartment.

"Yes," replied the old clerk, with a sigh.

"She was very beautiful at that time."

"Is she dead?"

"Dead to the world."

"Taken Hamlet's advice, and entered a nunnery?"

"She is the inmate of a lunatic asylum," replied the old gentleman, in a quavering voice.

Seeing that Josephs was so affected, Gerald determined to ask no more questions. The

old man arose and walked to the window, where he remained for some time without speaking, and with his back turned towards his young friend. From stifled sobs and the application of his pocket-handkerchief to his eyes, Boyne became aware that he had raised some sad recollections in his friend's breast.

"Forgive me, my dear Josephs," said Gerald, when the old clerk again faced him. "I was ignorant—"

"Of course," replied Josephs; "how could you tell? How was it possible that you should know that you were probing a wound that has no cure but the churchyard?"

He sat down on the sofa, and remained silent for some moments.

"She is my wife," said he, at last, in a broken voice, as he gazed, with eyes filled with tears, upon the lovely countenance that seemed to look upon them from the wall.

Then, again, a death-like silence, broken only by the ticking of the timepiece that stood upon the mantle-shelf, reigned between the two. Gerald puffed away at his pipe, and devoutly wished that he had not broached the subject of the picture.



"Every time I look at her," said Josephs, "every time I think of her, is worse than a dagger's thrust to me. The agony I feel when I think of the happiness that ought to have fallen to our lot is worse than a death-struggle. It is maddening. I often wonder how I keep my senses; how it is that I, too, am not in that hell on earth—a mad-house. That picture but increases my misery, yet I cannot part with it."

"Come, Josephs," said Boyne, soothingly, "let us talk of something else. I'm so sorry that I was so unfortunate as to touch on it."

"No," replied Josephs, grasping Boyne's hand; "I shall be better when I have unbosomed my secret. I took a liking to you, my boy, from the first day I saw you. I pitied you for your misfortunes; I admired the bold front with which you faced them. Your old friend will keep nothing from you. You shall hear from his own lips the secret that has embittered his days, the tragic romance that has cast an unfathomable gloom over the soul of such a dull and uninteresting individual as a merchant's clerk." Here his voice faltered, and he trembled so with

emotion that he was obliged to stop. When he had recovered, he continued his recital. "You know that I am a farmer's son? During one of my yearly holidays, I visited my brother, who still kept on the old farm. Whilst staying with him, I was introduced to my poor wife, who was the sister of a neighbouring farmer. I fell in love with her at once, and was deeply grieved to hear that she was engaged to a cousin, an officer on board a merchant-ship. I returned to London hopelessly in love, and hopeless of ever having my desires realized. I plodded on with my business, without taking any interest either in that or in anything else, for about a year and a half, when I received a letter from my brother, in which he stated that Isabel—that was her name—had quarrelled with her lover, and that all was broken off between them. What ecstasy that news put me in! With what eagerness I waited for the time when I should be able to take my fortnight's leave! I counted the days and weeks daily, and, as I approached nearer, I verily believe that I counted the hours. At last the day arrived, and I set off by the fastest coach (they were

the old coaching days then) for my brother's house. It will suffice to say that I wooed and won her, and about three months afterwards married her. We lived very happily together, and one child was born of our union. When this child was about a year old, Isabel received a letter from this sailor-cousin, George Radcliffe, stating that he wanted to be friends with her again, and that, if she had no objection, he would pay us a short visit. I was consulted about it, and of course gave my consent. He came. My wife received him as an old friend. No allusion was made by either of them to the former connexion between them. Once only, when I was alone with him during the evening, he remarked, with a seemingly hearty laugh, — 'What strange things take place in this world! But a few years ago I could have sworn that I should have married Isabel. A stupid tiff arose between us, and swamped our love for each other completely. We shall agree much better as friends than as sweethearts or husband and wife. There's a tartness about Isabel's tongue that wouldn't suit me. Some men like to be hauled over the coals a bit

by their wives. I presume you're one of them. I don't envy you, Isabel; though, I'm glad she has such a good kind of fellow, as you seem to be, for a husband.' That was all that was said by him on the subject. That night, before retiring to his bedroom, as he was taking his candle from my wife's hand, he turned to me with a frank smile, and asked if I objected to his giving Isabel a cousinly kiss. I remembered after, that the man's frame heaved as though it were shaken by some violent emotion, and the laugh that he gave as he said that he slept like a top, when I wished him a good night's rest, sounded hollow and forced. The next morning, as he did not make his appearance at the proper hour, my wife sent the servant to tell him that we were waiting for him. The girl came back, and stated that, although she had knocked several times, she had received no answer. As I was in a hurry to get my breakfast over and start for business, Isabel told me that she would go and awake him whilst I commenced my meal. The first mouthful was only just between my teeth, when a heart-rending shriek reached my ears. I rushed upstairs to the

room in which Radcliffe had slept. I found him cold and dead in the bed, and my wife swooning over him. I sent the maid at once for the nearest doctor. He was with me immediately. A glance at the dead man told him that his skill was of no use there, so he turned his attention to the recovery of my wife. For a long time his efforts were of no avail; she continued as unconscious and almost as lifeless-looking as the dead man on the bed. At last, when the medical man had exhausted all his remedies, and from the expression on his face, which I was anxiously watching, was about to give the case up as hopeless, she uttered several deep sighs and slowly unclosed her eyelids. She stared wildly around, not noticing what was said to her, until her eyes rested upon the lifeless face of her old lover; then she suddenly broke from us and threw herself, in a paroxysm of grief and tears, upon the corpse. 'George, George,' she cried, 'awake, dearest! Tell me you forgive me; tell me you love me!' I begged her gently to come away, when she turned on me like a tigress, with her beautiful eyes flashing fire, and her cheeks flushed with passion, and commanded me not to lay my

finger on her, dared me to touch her, told me that she hated me—that she would kill me, for I had killed her love,—that, had I not married her, he would have been alive then,—that his heart was broken because I had taken her from him. As my presence excited her so, the doctor requested me to leave the room. When he joined me, he said that the sudden shock had turned my wife's brain, and ordered that she should be closely watched. I was on no account to see her. I will not detail an account of the agony I suffered, the inquest, and the burial of the poor man's body. The *post-mortem* examination showed that he suffered from heart-disease, and, in all probability, the violent emotions which his meeting with poor Isabel had excited were the cause of his death. Hoping that my wife would recover her reason, I kept her in the house under the charge of a nurse. One day, through negligence on the part of this woman, she managed to escape from her, and make her way to the room where the child was kept. She took it away from the nursemaid, who was so terrified that she ran away from her. As soon as I heard of it, I hastened to the spot, and was just in time

to prevent her strangling the child. All her hatred seemed to be against myself and her child. She became so violent that I had to have her removed to an asylum as quickly as possible. I have only seen her twice since; and, as on both those occasions the very sight of me increased her madness, I determined to discontinue my visits to her. There is not the slightest hope of her recovery. It's hard to be hated by a being you love more than your own life, although she is mad." The subdued, sorrowful tone in which the old gentleman uttered these words brought tears into Gerald's eyes. "From what I heard afterwards, she could have only married me to spite her cousin. Still we were happy, very happy, before that unfortunate visit of Radcliffe. It would have been better for us if we had never met."

Mr. Josephs raised his eyes to the picture, and cast on it a long, mournful, and meditative glance.

"But your child?" asked Gerald.

"Dead," replied the old clerk. "All my love is in the tomb and the mad-house."

"You've a spare day to-morrow," said Carroll to Gerald that evening.

"Yes; it's a bank holiday."

"Then you'd better have a look over our hospital."

"All right."

"Well, suppose you meet me there by ten o'clock. I'd go up with you, but I expect I shall have to go out early to a midwifery case. You ask for me: any one will tell you where I am. I'm known by everybody up there."

Mr. Carroll drew himself up to his full height, and looked very proud and important.

"Can you come too, Mompas?" inquired he of the Government clerk.

"No," answered Mompas, in his lofty style.

"We don't keep bank holidays."

"You Government fellows are too great swells to take your holidays when business men do," exclaimed Boyne, laughing.

"No, it's not that," said Carroll. "It's because, like us poor devils of medical students, they don't do any business with bankers. As they never have any cash, it would be ridiculous of them to keep banking accounts."

Mr. Mompas wished his two friends a gruff



good-night, and hastily retired. He was slightly offended.

"I like to take the old fellow down a bit," exclaimed Carroll, with a wink. "He gets so precious lofty sometimes, that if it were not for a little wholesome snubbing he'd fancy himself a Secretary of State, instead of a Custom-house clerk with an inconveniently small salary. Whenever this process of self-inflation is going on within his brain, I subject him to a mental pricking, to let his vain airs out, or else he'd go on expanding like a soap-bubble, until at last he burst of his own accord. I wonder what he's about now. Stropping his razors, I expect—his usual habit when he's sulky."

END OF VOL. I.





